



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

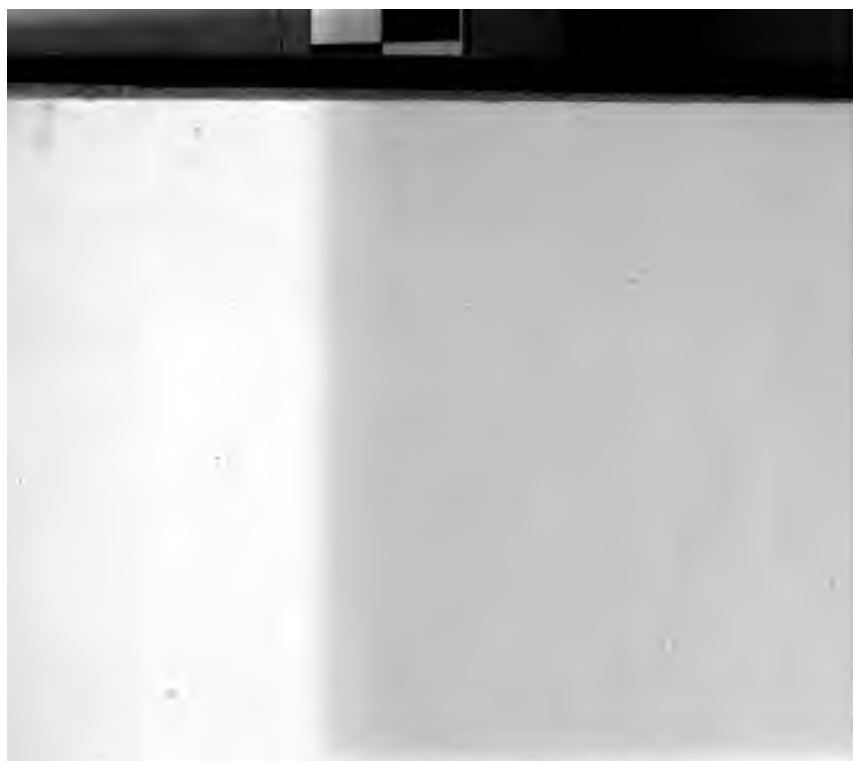
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

)



AMOURS OF GREAT MEN.



AMOURS OF GREAT MEN.

BY

ALBERT D. VANDAM,

AUTHOR OF "AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE."

"Let the high Muse chant loves Olympian,
We are but mortals, and must sing of man."

IN. TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



LONDON :

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1878.

[*Right of Translation reserved.*]

210. n. 52.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE AND HANSON, EDINBURGH
CHANDOS STREET, LONDON



CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

	PAGE
COMEDY-LOVE	
1. LOPE DE VEGA	2
2. MOLIÈRE	39
A BACHELOR FROM CONVICTION	
SWIFT	91
PLATO OR PRIAPUS?	
ROUSSEAU	163
A MODERN THESEUS	
MIRABEAU	231
THE ÉPILOGUE	
THE AUTHOR'S VISION	311





COMEDY-LOVE.

“ But deeds and language such as men do use,
And persons such as Comedy would choose,
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes.”

BEN JONSON.

IF the general literature of a country is supposed to be not only the test but also the outcome of her morals and manners as a whole, that part which deals with indigenous fiction, whether narrative or dramatic, but especially with the latter, may safely be assumed to represent a more or less accurate picture of the tenderer feelings, domestic idiosyncrasies and moral aspirations of her inhabitants at the period when such works were written. When, therefore, we would gain an idea of the kind of influence love exercised in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe, we can scarcely do better than inquire in what aspect it was treated by some of the master-dramatists

of Spain and France,* especially when both those whom we adduce were, in the thinnest of disguises, the heroes of some of their own productions.

I.

LOPE DE VEGA.

“ A human spirit here records
 The annals of its human strife;
 A human hand hath touched these chords,
 These songs may all be idle words,
 And yet—they once were life.”

OWEN MEREDITH.

“ Doutez si vous voulez de l'être qui vous aime,
 D'une femme ou d'un chien—mais non de l'amour même.
 L'Amour est tout
 Aimer est le grand point, qu'importe la maîtresse,
 Qu'importe le facon, pourvu qu'on ait l'ivresse.”

ALFRED DE MUSSET.

“ Kann der Liebe süß Verlangen,
 Emma, kann's vergänglich seyn?
 Was dahin ist und vergängen,
 Emma, kann's die Liebe seyn?
 Ihrer Flamme Himmelsglut,
 Stirbt sie wie ein irdisch Gut.”

SCHILLER, *An Emma*.

“ There are climates,” says Montesquieu,
 “ where physical nature is so strong that moral

* We intended to treat of England also, but for various reasons, love, such as it existed under the Commonwealth, and under the last Stuarts, and as treated by their dramatists, was not a fit subject for our theme. It was, save for a few unimportant exceptions, especially in the latter reigns, both on the stage and in the life of the better classes, a mere imitation of the French, less the polish and refinement.

laws are unavailing against her. In these lands they need instead of precepts—bolts.” It would be difficult to select a civilized country to which these lines are more applicable than the Spain of the sixteenth century. The licentious gallantry, prevalent in the highest society, but especially in that of the court, had passed into the daily habits of all classes, and become at last a national characteristic. It is in one of his most interesting and singular prose works that Lope de Vega has portrayed the existing state of morals, and as *Dorothea*, an autobiographical comedy, is, as we shall be able to show, part of the author’s own life, we cannot do better than reproduce some of its principal incidents as faithfully as possible, convinced that the Spanish poet and dramatist meant to sketch himself, and has done so with an incredible candour, never surpassed, and only equalled by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in his *Confessions*.

Lope’s father, Don Felix, was descended from an ancient and noble family, and somewhat of a poet himself. Tired of living in poverty and obscurity in one of the valleys interspersed among the Asturias, and having met with a beautiful lady in his native mountains of whom he became enamoured, he followed her to the capital. But as the runaway was already a married man and the father of two children, matters did not end quite

so easily. His wife, Donna Francisca Fernandez, a noble and proud Asturian, traced her husband to Madrid, where a reconciliation took place, "and," says Lope afterwards, "on that day, the first stone of the monument of my life was laid, on the peace of the jealous imagination of my mother. Thus," continues the poet, "became I the offspring of jealousy—what a birth! I leave you to draw the foreboding of a life begun under such auspices."

Well might the husband have exclaimed to his wife, "I am bound by fate,"

"And by that destiny to perform an act
Whereof what's past is prologue, what to come
In yours and my discharge."

The child of jealous imagination on the one hand, and of perhaps unwilling repentance on the other, was born in Madrid on the 25th of November, 1562. He received the rudiments of his education in his native town. Of the precocious development of his intelligence stories are told which would savour of the marvellous could sufficient credence be attached to them. If we are to believe Montalban, his best informed biographer and contemporary, the faculty of reflection preceded that of speech in Lope to a degree that he was compelled to repeat his lessons by gestures and signs rather than by verbal utterance. At the age of five he had

perfectly acquired not only the Spanish, but like Montaigne, also the Latin, and displayed such aptitude and passionate love for versification, that, in order to have a copy of the verses which he composed, he had to dictate them to some of his schoolfellows—he being as yet unable to write them down—rewarding their labours by sharing his breakfast with the youthful scribes. Lope himself appears, at least with regard to his taste for rhyming and the precocity of his poetical talent, to confirm the testimony of Montalban; he says that scarcely able to speak he composed from the dictation of the Muses verses which he compares to the first twitterings of the fledgeling bird in its nest.

A comparison, however, of the reported prodigies in his childish studies, and his progress at the University of Alcala de Henarès, whither he was sent at the age of ten, would lead us to conclude, that here, as in many similar cases, the truth has been considerably exaggerated. Lope himself records that he knew Latin thoroughly, but that he never got beyond the elements of Greek. As for the modern languages, he had made a profound study of the Italian, and was middlingly well acquainted with French. He says nothing of Portuguese, but as at that time every educated Spaniard knew this tongue as his own, we may take

it for granted that Lope did not prove an exception.

His studies, far from complete, were suddenly interrupted by the death, almost simultaneous, of both his parents. To make matters worse, his patrimony, small, but probably sufficient for his immediate wants, was absconded with by a fraudulent guardian; and thus, at the age of fourteen, Lope found himself without support, save that vouchsafed by a distant relative, Don Miguel del Carpio. His sister and brother, both older than he, were unable to help him. The latter was roaming the world in the Spanish militia, the former found a home somewhere; at any rate, she drops out of the poet's history for ever.

The first use that Lope made of his emancipation from parental restraint is a trait worthy of notice, inasmuch as it foreshadows the empire his imagination was henceforth to exercise over all his plans. Don Miguel had kept him at school, but seized suddenly with the desire to see and know the world, Lope determined to start at once, without the remotest idea where his travels would end.

Having selected a companion in his mad enterprise, the two lads started, after collecting all the valuables they could lay their hands on, and with no other avowed purpose than to place

as great a distance as possible between themselves and Madrid. A few weeks journey brought them face to face with the to them disagreeable and surprising fact that the world was larger and their purses smaller than they had previously imagined. At Segovia they found themselves obliged to sell a chain and change some doubloons, and the dealer to whom they applied, suspecting that all was not right, handed them over to the magistrate, by whose kind intervention they were sent back to Madrid, wiser, if poorer, than when they left the town.

Whether Lope had by this escapade forfeited the good graces of his protector we know not, certain is it that distress and starvation were staring him in the face, and that he became aware of the fact of having no alternative but that of energetic action if he would not die of want. Scarcely fifteen years old, his physical forces but barely developed, he nevertheless resolved on becoming a soldier, and with this intent made his way into Portugal, then occupied by the troops of Philip II. Military life, however, had very little attraction for him, for at the conclusion of one campaign he left it to try a different career.

Fortunately he found a kind and powerful patron in Geronimo Manrico de Lara, bishop of Avila, twelfth inquisitor-general, and the Pope's

legate on the fleet that won the battle of Lepanto. This excellent prelate took Lope into his house as secretary, and divining, no doubt, the genius of the young poet, made him resume his university studies. Lope ever afterwards remembered the kindness of his patron, and in several works makes mention of him in the most flattering terms. His first work of any importance was no doubt composed under the prelate's roof, and with the intention of pleasing him. It was a pastoral comedy under the title of *Jacinta*, in no way remarkable save as an instance of the poet's youthful genius, seeing that he was scarcely sixteen years old when it was composed.

Notwithstanding the mutual goodwill of patron and protégé, a time came, and that shortly, when the latter left the former, and curious to relate, for no apparent reason. As the author of this book prides himself on bringing to light in this essay many facts about Lope de Vega hitherto unknown in England, facts which are not even mentioned or suspected in the principal biography of the poet written in English, he owes it to his readers to reveal the sources whence he derived these particulars.*

* Some forty years ago, M. Fauriel, Professor of Modern Literature at the Sorbonne, delivered a biographical introduction to

To resume. We have said that Lope parted from his benefactor for no apparent reason. But the date of this departure from the bishop's employ curiously coincides with the most stormy period of the poet's youth as depicted in *Dorothea*, a period in which his heart, opening to the first impressions of love, experienced all the bitterness and all the delights, all the pride and all the humiliations consequent upon a deep-felt but youthful passion. Objection may be taken, perhaps, to the extreme youth of the hero; it may be said that such exalted and capricious feelings were scarcely likely to nestle in a lad of seventeen, but be it remembered that this lad was Lope de Vega, the native of a clime in which every physical feeling becomes precocious, and that besides, he himself was still

a course of lectures on Lope de Vega and the Spanish drama. He then proved conclusively what had hitherto been purposely concealed or altogether ignored—viz. that not only had the poet written part of his autobiography in the drama known under the title of *Dorothea*, but that this work chiefly related to two love affairs which Lope had had in his youth. I myself have carefully examined the evidence adduced by M. Fauriel, and have not the slightest doubt as to its authenticity, and the deductions derived therefrom by the learned professor. The hero of *Dorothea*, but thinly disguised under the name of Ferdinand, is none other than Lope de Vega himself. As such, I have not hesitated to avail myself fully of this curious piece of evidence. In my essay on "Molière," I may have occasion to show, perhaps, that the same idea must have struck the great French dramatist.

more precocious than most of his countrymen in imagination and genius, consequently in love.

Be this as it may, Lope himself informs us that in Madrid he knew a lady whom he qualifies by the title of relative, in whose house he had found aid and consolation immediately after the death of his parents. Ever since then he continued to visit this lady, "She had," he says, "a daughter of fifteen, and a niece of about seventeen, which was nearly my own age. I might have asked either the one or the other in marriage; my stubborn ill-luck prevented even the idea of such a step. Vanity and idleness, the scourge of all virtue, and the night that darkens all understanding, did not fail to estrange me in a short time from all my first studies, and the evil was still more aggravated by my attachment for Marfisa; which was the name of the pretty niece. Intimacy increased our passion, as is generally the case, but thanks to my discretion and prudence no evil resulted from it. After some time Marfisa was wedded to an old *savant*. The day she was taken away I had carefully to purge her lips lest they should kill her husband by the venom they had imbibed from conjugal apprehensions. We wept a long while behind a door, inseparably mingling our tears and our lamentations.

Up till now there is nothing very striking or

new in the love-situation of our poet. A young girl driven against her will to marry an old man has been, and will be, the theme of innumerable novels and comedies as long as the world lasts, or at least as long as society holds together, which means pretty well the same thing. We all know that if there are marriages inscribed on the official registers, there are many more that are formed by the laws of nature, either by the sweet conformity or by the total dissimilarity in thought of two beings, and by bodily conformations; we are all aware that heaven and earth contradict each in this respect incessantly.

After this "mingling of our tears and our lamentations," many of the younger readers would expect Lope to be inconsolable, at least for some time; they would expect to see him commit some desperate deed, or to hide himself in solitude, refusing to be consoled. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," is an old saying, which has lately been altered by a cynic into "Absence makes the heart grow stronger." It does both. Absence diminishes the effects of a small passion; it increases that of a great one; it is like the wind which blows out the candle, while it kindles the fire into flame; and besides, men are in this respect different to women. *Les femmes s'attachent aux hommes par les faveurs qu'elles leur accordent; les hommes guérissent par ces*

même faveurs, remarks La Bruyère. Even so; whatever Marfisa may have suffered, her lover never gave himself time to suffer half as much.

On the very day of Marfisa's wedding, one of Lope's best friends brought him an invitation from a lady, whom he had already met at one or two parties, and whom he had had the good-fortune of pleasing, "Why," he says, "I know not; I ignore whether it was by my demeanour, or by my personal appearance, or perhaps by both combined." He was not slow to accept the invitation; the pleasure of being beloved by one of the fairer sex was one which Lope could never resist throughout his life. He carried Balzac's aphorism, *Qu'il vaut d'être aimé que d'aimer*, to its utmost limits. *Amo naturalmente a quien me ama, el no se aborecer quien me aborece*. "I naturally love those who love me, and do not know how to hate those that hate me," he confesses. Accordingly he went. If we are to believe him, the lady was most beautiful, and of a beauty which the French have termed *beauté du diable*. "How shall I describe her to you," he exclaims, "when my very blood freezes in its veins at the memory of her. As for her name, it was lioness, tigress, serpent, syren, Circe, Medea, pain, glory, heaven and hell, and—they may all be resolved into one—Dorothea."

We wonder whether Walter Shandy by the aid

of his *cognomology* would have been able to make aught of this jumble; whether he would have arrived at an estimate of the lady's character. We ourselves are puzzled. If there be nothing in a name, what is there in such multitude? Is the part greater than the whole, or what? Did Lope mean that the good and the evil were curiously blended in her character? Perhaps so. But beyond indicating them by those half-flattering epithets, he does not enumerate the bad qualities. He mentions none but the good, and from these we may infer that she was as accomplished as she was beautiful.

The first interview between the lovers settled the question. "I do not know what star propitious to lovers was in the ascendant, but scarcely had we seen and spoken, but what we were all in all to each other."

"Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight?"

asks Shakspeare.

Had Lope in a few short hours forgotten Marfisa? It would be difficult to say. Man, we have had occasion to remark already, is a curious animal. He takes the good things Venus provides for him. A man cannot live with the dead or absent, because his love is of a more material kind. For every widower you shall find a dozen widows. The Indian widow immolates

herself on the grave of the husband. The Roman widow, being asked why she did not marry again, answered, "My husband is still living for me." Does the husband the same on the grave of his wife? Perhaps there may be found another excuse for Lope's inconstancy. *Quand on a le cœur encore agité par les restes d'une passion on est plus près d'en prendre une nouvelle que quand on est entièrement guéri*, avers Rochefoucauld, and with some natures, especially men's, the saying would not be without truth. And often it is spite or pique which makes men act thus. A woman when deserted makes little noise about it, but remains inconsolable for a long while, if not for ever. Not so a man; he vociferously declaims against the woman who has willingly or unwillingly left him, but he consoles himself. A bachelor-life is, as a rule, the result of no-love, not of an unrequited or frustrated passion; a maiden-life, on the contrary, is nearly always caused by an unfortunate love-affair.

Dorothea was what in our modern slang we term a grass-widow. Though young, she had been married for some time; her husband was in America, and not expected to return; the only news hoped for from him was the news of his death. Meanwhile, Dorothea lived under the guardianship of a mother and an aunt, two old

women of jolly but rather doubtful morals, not blessed with worldly goods, but not particular as to the means of getting them. In fact, Dorothea up till now had been obliged to keep the house going by entertaining lovers, whom the crones took care to provide plentifully. But with the advent of Lope all this changed. Dorothea's heart was really touched; she loved the young poet, and for himself. This disinterested love scarcely pleased the old harridans, who thought, with La Fontaine, that—

“Le temps est cher en amour comme en guerre.”

Dorothea made a compromise. Unwilling to renounce Lope, she tolerated the addresses of some *grand seigneur*, whom, by cleverly executed delays, magnificent expectations, and moderate favours, she kept at her feet, probably in order not to fall out with her guardians. “This *liaison*,” says Lope, “did not prevent us from coming to so good an understanding, that it seemed as if we had known each other all our life.” “With this *grand seigneur*,” continues our hero elsewhere, “I had many terrible adventures, not from arrogance or pride, knowing full well that the feeble who struggle against the mighty must yield sooner or later. One night, listening to my passion rather than to discretion, I knocked at Dorothea's door, which was opened by the

grand seigneur, who happened to be there, and who insisted upon coming down, despite the entreaties of mother and daughter. As he had recognised my voice, he came sword in hand, made a furious thrust at me, by which he pinned me to the door by the trimmings of my cloak—which fortunately I wore loosely floating from my throat—shutting the door in my face, while I with one bound saved myself by flight, leaving my cloak suspended at the lintel.”

At the thought of the anxious night Dorothea must have passed, he consoles himself by saying that, as he had no means of acquainting her with his escape, he suffered as much by dwelling upon her anxiety as she must have suffered by thinking him wounded or dead.

The rivalry did not last long, for fortunately the King sent his assailant away on a mission. The latter endeavoured to persuade the poet to accompany him as his secretary, “not that I could be of any use to him, but because he wanted to part me from Dorothea. He went away at last, and I remained the peaceful possessor of a treasure such as Cræsus might have envied me, despite all his riches, which I did not envy him.”

If the love-sick poet did not envy Cræsus, it is certain that Dorothea’s mother and aunt would have willingly exchanged him for this

personage, for notwithstanding Lope's imaginary opulence, he was unable to contribute anything towards his mistress's support; on the contrary, she, understanding how his poverty must gall him, pledged and sold her jewels, her plate, and other valuables, until there was nothing left to pledge. In this manner the *liaison* lasted for five years, during which time Dorothea was obliged to provide by the labour of her hands for her necessities. Her lovers—of the mother's providing—forsook her, for, as Lope well observes, beauty deteriorates when it can no longer deck itself with ornaments.

“When food and raiment now grew scarce
Fate put a period to the farce,”

sings Swift. The fates, in this instance, were personified by the mother and aunt, who told Dorothea that she was the talk of the town, alleging that her lover's verses had contributed in giving publicity to matters which, without them, would have made less noise.

Dorothea's love for Lope was such, however, that she could not think of leaving him; she would have preferred death. Her guardians did not understand love in this way, and wished for Dorothea lovers who could give her diamonds, instead of one for whom she was obliged to sell or pledge hers. They were determined to make an end of all relations between the young people.

Here commences the drama of *Dorothea*, from which I will give one or two excerpts, to show at the same time how Molière availed himself of it when he wanted to depict similar situations, of which he himself was also the hero.*

The play opens with a scene in which the mother and the aunt, after a most degrading quarrel about Dorothea, concert more ignobly still to work her ruin. Gherarda, the aunt, the viler of the two, undertakes the most difficult part of the plot. She shall present to her niece and compel her to accept the advances of a certain Don Bela, a wealthy American, head over ears in love with Dorothea, and who has promised to cover the object of his passion, as well her relatives, with gold and luxury. Immediately Theodora, the mother, intimates, with severe threats, to her daughter that she is not to see Fernando (who is none other than Lope) again. Left to herself, Dorothea gives way to her grief in a most masterly written soliloquy. Lope has cleverly reproduced the painful situation of the young girl, who, virtuously inclined—the fact of her being a married woman is, in this instance, and not without reason, charitably overlooked—endowed with the most elevated soul

* See the love quarrel between Valère and Mariane in the *Tartuffe*, act ii. sc. 4.

and sentiments, finds herself in the power of two infamous procuresses, who are bent upon her dishonour in order to reap the profits therefrom.

After this monologue, Dorothea, accompanied by her maid, starts for Fernando's house to acquaint him with her mother's decision. Fernando has been up betimes, and is whiling the time away in serious conversation with Julio, half-servant, half-secretary, an excellent fellow, who is very fond of his master. This character is evidently a fictitious one, intended to be the buffoon of the piece—a buffoon of a new stamp, a kind of university imbecile, full of dead cram-learning, knowing by heart all the great names and many classical aphorisms, and ever ready to quote them when the misadventures or follies of his master provide him with an opportunity. Dorothea arrives at Fernando's at the moment when the latter has finished telling Julio a dream he had that night—a poetical dream, be it understood, one of those which novelists and dramatists so often need, and which they are so fond of inventing. He has seen the ocean roll as far as Madrid, carrying on its waves a vessel magnificently equipped and laden with gold. On the deck he has recognised Dorothea, busily collecting ingots, after which she lands, and passing in front of Fer-

nando, who humbly salutes, she turns away without noticing him. Dorothea finds her lover still under the impression of this melancholy foreboding; she tells him that they must not see each other again. The scene, cleverly worked out, and no doubt possessing a substratum of truth, owes much to the author's invention. As may be imagined, Dorothea is deeply moved, and for a few moments almost unable to explain the cause of her emotion.*

Fernando. What ails thee, love? Why bleed me drop by drop? Tell me at once, Fernando, thou art dead, and Julio shall go and fetch the undertakers to bury me. Do not prolong my torture with doubts; the dread of misfortune is more cruel to bear than the misfortune itself. As long as the evil remains in the imagination, one is occupied with the thought of its coming; when it is come, we think of the remedy.

Dorothea. What dost thou wish me to add, my Fernando, after having told thee that I am no longer thine?

Fernando. But why all this. Hast thou received letters from Lima?

Dorothea. No, love.

Fernando. In this case, who has the power to tear thee from my embraces?

* I have abridged it, omitting the unimportant details.

Dorothea. Who, but this cruel one, this tigress who gave me birth, if it be possible that I can be of the same blood with one who does not love thee. She has just picked a quarrel with me, insulted me, told me that I am lost, dishonoured, irrevocably ruined by thee, and that to-morrow thou wouldst leave me for some one else. I have resisted her; my hair has borne the brunt. Look at them, those tresses which thou calledst the rays of thy sun, the gold of which Cupid wove the chain which holds thy soul imprisoned. I bring thee those which she tore away, since she wills it that those that remain shall belong to another. She has sold me to some Indian; gold has been all powerful; she has concocted the whole affair with Gherarda, from the moment she knew that last month I sold the gold lace of my mantle, and yesterday my summer cloak. She says that it is to provide thee with money wherewith to gamble, thou, whose whole expense consists in buying books in different languages! She says that with thy syren tongue thou slowly draggest me to the gulf of old age, to be submerged by its disillusionings and chastised by repentance. O God, Fernando, let me tear these eyes out, since they are no longer thine. Why spare them? But no, she deceives herself if she thinks that some one else shall have me with them; this other will find there thy image,

which will know how to defend them. Oh, my God, my God!

Fernando. But, Dorothea, my love, why all these laments for so small a cause? Dry thine eyes, keep back the pearls that flow from their pupils. Do not risk the roses of thy cheeks being withered, let not the harmony of thy features be disturbed by violent emotions. I swear by the love I had for thee, thou took'st my breath away.

Dorothea. The love thou hadst for me, Fernando?

Fernando. Which I had—yes, and still have; love is not a shadow that vanishes with its object. I fancied for a moment that thou wert to be exiled at the petition of some jealous suitor, or that thy mother had died suddenly of an attack of bile, or that perhaps thy husband was come back from the Indies. But, once more, such lamentations for a mere trifle. Give back to my heart the joy it felt at seeing thee, and which the sadness of thy words took away; be consoled, and get thee home. I expect a friend on business, and it is not meet that he should find thee here. It is only in the house of a judge or of a *savant* that a lady, and especially a lady of thy beauty might be seen without causing suspicion; not in a bachelor's apartment, where there are nothing but mallets, musical instruments and foils.

Dorothea. I think thou misunderstoodst me.

Fernando. What! Have I so badly recited my lesson, that I give thee the impression of having misunderstood thee?

Dorothea. What! When I tell thee that our intimacy is broken off, thou art so quickly resigned.

Fernando. Not more quickly than thou hast announced our rupture.

Dorothea. I am dying.

Fernando. Nonsense; dying people cannot walk, and thou camest all the way from thy house.

Dorothea. Perhaps thou thinkest that I am jesting?

Fernando. Certainly not; tidings from the Indies are serious things. It is getting late, my darling, thou hadst better go.

Dorothea. Thou turnest me out of thy house.

Fernando. And pray, what business hast thou in my house, if, as thou sayest, thou must not come again?

Dorothea. Not come again? And why not?

Fernando. Because thou startest for the Indies, and betwixt us there will be the ocean.

Dorothea. True—an ocean of tears.

Fernando. Women's tears are the lining of laughter; no spring storm is over so quickly.

Dorothea. What hast thou done for me in all

those years, which should have obliged me to feign the love which I had for thee?

Fernando. Thou also hast said, *which I had for thee.*

Dorothea. And it was rightly said, for he who loses my love without regret was surely not deserving of it.

Dorothea, who had counted upon the tears and prayers of Lope as an evidence of sympathy wherefrom to draw the courage to resist the schemes of her mother, retires in despair. Her lover has simply acquiesced in the separation, he coolly accepts the facts without addressing a word of consolation to the poor girl who had sacrificed everything to him, and who was but waiting for that word to throw every consideration to the winds and to remain with him till death.

But though this word has not been spoken, we must not infer that Lope is less unhappy than his mistress, he also is a prey to profound grief, which he shows in a subsequent scene with Julio. Nevertheless, he determines to leave Madrid, but the wherewithal is wanting. Money he has none, valuables to dispose of he never had. In this emergency he appeals to an old flame, Marfisa, who has now been a widow for some time—Marfisa, who loves him still, notwithstanding her knowledge of his relations with Dorothea.

She assists him, believing as he tells her, that he has killed a man and is obliged to fly. Dorothea, informed of his departure, tries to make an end of herself by swallowing a diamond which Lope had given her in former times ; she does not succeed, however, but brings on a dangerous illness, in consequence of which she becomes poorer still, and is at last obliged to accept the proffered aid of Don Bela.

This is the state of things when Lope returns to Madrid, after an absence of three months, during which it has been impossible for him to forget Dorothea. He says rightly to a friend, who a few days after his return, entertains him with particulars about his mistress, and then suddenly stops, lest he might reopen scarcely healed wounds. "Do not mind my wounds, they have never been closed."

The first night of his return he passes under the windows of Dorothea, who recognises the song and the singer. In fact, in a few days a reconciliation takes place, which, howsoever genuine on Dorothea's part, and romantic on the whole, does not last long. The fact is that Lope, as he himself confesses, is disillusionised. Dorothea is no longer so charming as he imagined her to be, "distance lent enchantment to the view." "When one wishes to clean something, he washes it; my passion has been washed off by the tears of Dorothea. What was killing me,"

he says, "was the thought that she was enamoured of Don Bela," but when once convinced to the contrary, he becomes somewhat like the dog in the manger; his passion for Marfisa revives, "for, after : lio remarks, "it is not pleasant to play d fiddle, especially when the first fiddle e husband." Lope determines upon his ture with Dorothea, he is but watching or an opportunity. His passion for her is extinguished even amidst the joys of oped-for reconciliation.

Les froideurs et relâchements dans l'amour ont leurs causes ; en amour il n'y a guère d'autre raison de ne plus s'aimer que de s'être trop aimés. The author of *Les Caractères* is right. Temperament has a great deal to do with jealousy, though the latter does not always presuppose a great passion. No sooner was Lope convinced of the unalterable affection of Dorothea than he began to cool towards her, to reason upon his infatuation, and reason is the greatest enemy to love. *Plus on juge moins on aime*, is as profound as it is true. An interrupted love-affair is not unlike a broken watch, you may repair it, but the chances are that you will never get it to go the old pace. Scruples obtruded themselves upon Lope with regard to his position in the eyes of the world. This is his own confession at a moment when we may suspect him of exaggeration, but not of

falsehood or dissimulation. It would be difficult to advance a reason for this sudden change, but then it is very difficult to advance reasons for many of these changes in human feelings. "There is nature and human nature," says Sam Slick. Science has pretty well revealed the mysteries of the one, the other still baffles her, and very often.

"I was led to reflect one day upon the degrading position I occupied with regard to Dorothea, and resolved to cure myself of my infatuation for her." *Similia similibus curantur.* It would seem that Lope understood the principle well, and made up his mind to apply it to his love-affair. "Marfisa and I had been brought up together, she had been the object of my first affections in life's spring-time, but her marriage and Dorothea's charms made me forget her for some time as completely as if I had never known her. It is true that the untimely death of her husband having brought her back, we saw each other again, but without any other result than what might have been expected from our first affection. I endeavoured to be amiable with her, but it was useless, for she perceived quickly enough that I was deceiving her. Nevertheless, in order not to appear resigned at my indifference she tolerated me, and in this way politeness and familiarity took the guise of tenderness."

Curiously enough, as we shall see anon, we find Molière in a similar situation with regard to Catherine Leclerc, with this difference, that here there seems to have been a child, the offspring of the first loves of Lope and Marfisa. This child, mentioned but once by Montalban, Lope's biographer, is undoubtedly Marcella, the eldest of his two daughters, whom after his marriage he received into his own house, and designates under the title of cousin.

Whether it was this child, or the conviction that he was really occupying an equivocal position, or the kindness and modesty of Marfisa, we know not, but certain is it that after some time Lope broke once and for all with Dorothea. The intimacy with Marfisa was renewed, even before the *liaison* with Dorothea was entirely dissolved. But Lope was evidently determined to have done with illegitimate connexions, to devote himself to his studies, and to respectably settle in life. He himself shall narrate the last episode in the amours of his youth.

"Some time after, Marfisa took it into her head to make me a shirt with yellow embroidery and trimmings, as was then the fashion. She informed me of her intention by the following note: 'If thou art not afraid of Dame Dorothea picking a quarrel with thee about a shirt which I am embroidering for thee, allow me to send it.

It is the least thou canst do for me in return for the blood I have spilt in making it, charmed beforehand with the idea of seeing thee wear it. If, however, it is likely to be a subject of disagreement between thee and Dorothea, I will not finish it, rather than make it the cause of any annoyance; for I should be jealous of the trouble thy reconciliation might cost thee.'

"To these jealous hints and craving for finery I opposed my modesty, for though I was always fond of being carefully dressed, I never cared to become a subject of admiration on this point. . . . But my arguments availed little, Marfisa carried the point; the shirt finished she sent it to me by a servant with a note. Oh, what precaution I had to take with all those notes! Towards nightfall I wrote to Dorothea, and while waiting for her maid, who was to come and fetch it, I placed the letter in my pocket with that received from Marfisa, and by some mishap gave the one instead of the other."

Dorothea considered this an intentional insult, and though Lope confessed his wrong, by denying the design of purposely insulting Dorothea, he took the opportunity of this quarrel to break with Dorothea, seeing that nothing would satisfy her but the tearing up of the shirt given him by Marfisa. Nor did Lope remain long with the latter. Why they did not

marry—unless it was for the reason that few men care to marry the woman who has been their mistress—is not stated. Marfisa contracted a second marriage, and died in a foreign clime, killed, it is said, by the jealousy of her husband.

Here, as it were, ends, as far as we are concerned, all interest in Lope's life, though it was prolonged for many years, and terminated honourably and even gloriously. He married once or twice—the second union has been designated as another illicit connexion, but his wife and eldest son having died, he entered into Holy Orders, devoting the remainder of his years to the composing of plays, their number amounting in all to more than five hundred, exclusive of his various poems.

Beyond the interest attached to any graphic picture of bygone manners and morals, the *tragic action*, as Lope calls *Dorothea*, is of little value either to the literary or dramatic student. Nor are the love-affairs, as portrayed in that play, of a kind to excite much sympathy or admiration. But there were other reasons why I inserted these *amours* in my pages. The Spanish dramatist was, first of all, a contemporary of Shakspeare, and though far below the great English bard, and scarcely equal to many of the latter's contemporary fellow-playwrights and countrymen in genius, he

was a creator in the best sense of the word. Like Shakspeare, he proceeded quite independently of the rules of antiquity, like Shakspeare, he moved the hearts of the masses by his dramas, he charmed them by his lively and poetical comedies. Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, are immeasurably superior in knowledge of the human heart, in characterisation, in poetical treatment; but the Spaniard bears the palm for fertility of invention, for skilful tying and untying of stage intrigue, for compact development of the action, which rarely if ever exceeds the period of three days. Whilst, however, the English dramatists' reputation and influence were confined, for more than a century at least, solely to their own country, the Spanish productions, though much inferior in literary and poetical excellence, soon found their way into France and Italy, where, especially in the former country, they met with a welcome though secret reception, the French playwrights being anxious not to divulge the sources whence they derived their plots. For this reason alone, if not for any other, Lope would be entitled to mention at my hands, for the reader may remember that at the outset I claimed to be actuated by a more serious motive than that of simply chronicling love-intrigue. A task like that would, however well performed,

have been trivial compared with the aim, however badly executed, of showing how the *amours* of great men have influenced not only the morals and manners, but also the literature, and, in some instances, the politics and polemics of their contemporary and succeeding ages. "For," says Mr. Carlyle, in his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, "as I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world is, at bottom, the history of the great men who have worked there. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world; the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, were the history of these." With more reason than the great philosopher, I may add the concluding sentence of the paragraph. "Too clearly it is a topic we shall do no justice to in this place." "One comfort is," continues the sage of Chelsea, "that Great Men, taken up in any way, are profitable company. We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man without gaining something by him." As such

I must be excused for having treated of Lope de Vega's love-affairs, for not only do they enable us to form a correct estimate of the tenderer relations between men and women in a country which was then in the van of civilisation, they also give us the opportunity of judging the exact value of that professed sentiment of chivalry with which Spain has been credited, and which unfortunately washes off in the picture given to us by the great dramatist. There is something else. Lope de Vega is probably the first—at least we know of no one before him—who embodied his personal experiences in a more or less performable dramatic form. Had Shakspeare done so, how much the richer should we have been in distinct conceptions of the sexual relations of one of the most glorious epochs in English history. But we have nothing but his sonnets to guide us, and even these may be the outcome of the craving after an ideal, not the representations of a reality. In fact we have always thought so, and this thought has led to an inference not complimentary to Elizabethan England, as far as her love-affairs were concerned. We have never been able to reconcile ourselves to the fact that Shakspeare's comedies, where they descend to the common facts of life, are composed of two dissimilar elements—viz., the comic, which is

always true to English manners, and the romantic, which is ever transplanted on to a foreign country. Was there, according to Shakspeare, no romance in his time, that he always persisted in transporting from his native soil? Of course we cannot answer the question, but this we may admit notwithstanding our anxious researches, we are unable to find any English person whose *amours* would vie in interest with those from which we have treated. This must in some way explain the entire absence up till now of Englishmen from our gallery, and we have thought it but just to ourselves and to the reader to give the explanation.

Lope de Vega may then be regarded as having supplied a valuable precedent, by making his personal experiences the main plot of a play, regardless of the after-consideration that this play, from its inordinate length, is unfit for scenic representation. Of this example many subsequent dramatists—notably Molière, and through him the dramatists of the Restoration, not to say those of our own times—availed themselves; hence these experiences became lessons to the multitude.

For that *Dorothea* is in some parts Lope's own history there can be not the smallest doubt. It is not the fancy of the author of this book, though

he has some pardonable pride in having brought to light facts, which every biographer with the exception of M. Fauriel had hitherto overlooked, and which were decidedly unknown in England. That the reader may be equally certain as to the authenticity of these facts, he proposes to give in conclusion some extracts from Lope's writings in which he speaks of *Dorothea*.

The poet was very young when he composed the piece ; he revised and altered it several times and at various intervals, which shows a predilection in no way warranted by its merits, and only to be explained by the theory we have advanced. This is how he qualifies his work in some verses addressed to a friend. "*Dorothea*, the last, and perhaps the dearest, of my muses, claims the light of day." These verses preceded the publication of the piece, which appeared in Madrid, in 1632, less than two years before Lope's death. Notwithstanding our own opinion as to the slight merit of the piece, the tender solicitude of the author for an exceptional production of his youth might be explained by a certain vanity, and by the high opinion he himself had conceived of its literary worth. There are undoubtedly in *Dorothea* beautiful passages, quite worthy of the poet ; but it is equally true that, from an artistic standpoint, it contains incongruities, positive defects, and monstrous deviations from all

dramatic rules, which could not have escaped the acumen of so skilled a playwright, who in no other of his works commits similar enormities—enormities which would not have been tolerated on any stage in Spain, or elsewhere. But admitting that Lope considered the muse who inspired his *Dorothea* far the “dearest of his muses,” it is not solely in the literary merit of the piece that we must seek the reason of this preference, but rather and above all in the nature and the special motive of the piece. Unless we are much mistaken, and apart from all the incongruities of form and composition, *Dorothea* neither was, nor could be, for Lope de Vega, an ordinary drama, any more than the *Misanthrope* was or could be an ordinary play to Molière; they were both the fruits of a more direct and personal inspiration than any of their previous or subsequent works; they were the original and bold translations of personal impressions and experience, and not mere art-creations aiming at a faithful imitation of nature. *Dorothea* was for Lope not a poetical fiction, a novel invented or brought together from various sources for the pleasure of inventing; it was his history, his biography, or at least a fragment of it. He had little or nothing to invent—it is his own past which he narrates; the same as Molière, by some prophetic vision if you will, narrates his future in *L'Ecole des Femmes*,

and his present in the *Misanthrope*. They are his own love-affairs which Lope places before us, the stormy passions of his youth and their concomitant aberrations, which he loves to dwell upon in his old age, impelled thereto by a similar sentiment to that which makes the soldier recount his battles, the sailor the dangers he has braved by sea. "The tempests of love were at last appeased," he writes to his friend Dr. Matthias de Porras, during the peaceful years of his marriage; "I was at last delivered from their fury. Each morning I saw my gentle spouse open her sweet eyes at my side, and I was unharassed by the doubts and fears by which door I had best make my escape." To a man who thinks and writes like this, it would be pleasant to dwell upon the storms weathered when a safe haven was reached. Another consideration may have induced him to give this part of his own life, seeing the incapables who were around him, and foreseeing the incapables that were to follow. That he has mixed fact with fiction is more than probable; every great man from Goethe downwards has done so, and we have no reason to think that Lope was the exception. Much more might we advance, but one other passage from *Dorothea* itself will suffice.

Julio, his companion, tells him, after their three months' absence from Madrid, that if the

amours of Don Fernando were put on the stage, there would be an end to them and all precepts of art, which allow no more than twenty-four hours for the imaginary duration of a piece, to which Fernando answers, "It is because my history is a true one that it does not admit of the rules laid down by art."

M. Fauriel's opinion, which I have but repeated, is therefore, as may be seen, not based on flimsy foundation, and we owe him thanks for having lifted the veil which for so long hid a most interesting period in a great man's life, for that *Dorothea* contains the revelation of this period, no one will doubt after reading the preceding pages.



II.

MOLIÈRE.

"I love and hate her."—*Cymbeline*.

"A Molière je lègue le cocuage."•

SCARRON, *Testament Burlesque*.

"Das wollen alle Herren seyn,
Und Keiner ist Herr von sich."

GOETHE.

THE human passions and their entanglements seem more easy of solution and cure in others than in ourselves. Our friends confide to us their mental ailments and their phenomena, with a view of our opinions thereon, the same as the physician when ill does not prescribe for himself, but calls in his colleague; the same as the author consults his brother-author, the painter his fellow-artist upon his work. As a rule, the advice thus asked and given is valuable enough. We help our friends to avoid many mistakes. Yet no sooner are we similarly situated, than we rush headlong into the very pitfalls from which we have warned them. Especially is this the case when love clutches hold of us. "I do much wonder," says Benedict, "that one man, seeing

how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he has laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love." It is because we are not so much blind as of distorted vision. A man under its influence looks through a glass that is not transparent, on the other side of which is a world of Antinous, thinks he looks in a mirror and sees the beautiful youth for himself, and he is the gods for having vouchsafed to him a metamorphosis whereby he shall woo and win. Love has many tools for the destruction or the improvement of humanity; Vanity is the handle that fits them all, and by its attractive appearance beguiles men into taking them up. Molière, who might have spoken the very words of Benedict—Molière, than whom no man—save three, Shakspeare, Goethe, and Schiller—could better gauge love's passion to its inmost depths, who had studied every trick and wile of the boy-god and his wanton mother, steps deliberately into the snare from which he has warned so many others, and from which he only escapes by death, his great mind maimed by the bitterness of ill-requited and betrayed affection. Is it not true that the "love divine" which the poets sang, as often lights its torch to blind and dazzle as to guide us on our way?

To have the history of that great poet's heart, we must speak of one love only. He had others, which were the comedy of his life, as this was the drama. They were the lighter chapters in a book, which without them would be too serious. They were the *levers de rideau* in which the young author tries his strength before venturing upon the larger play, wherein he intends to portray the entire anatomy of the human heart, regardless of possible failure, determined to ignore nothing, should the craving for all-embracing knowledge cost him his happiness; they are the comic prologue and interludes of a passion-play—in its literal sense—which becomes tragic enough at the end.

* * * *

In the first years of Louis the Fourteenth's reign there wandered over the sunny south of France a company of strolling players, mostly composed of Parisians, among whom there was a sprinkling of young men of good family, and the management of which was divided between the son of a *tapissier du roi*, Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, afterwards Molière, then about twenty-three years old, and one Madeleine Béjard, the senior by about four years of her copartner. Madeleine Béjard, the daughter of a government official, with some pretensions to nobility, was the eldest of two brothers and one sister, all performing in the same troupe with her. They had been in

man in the service of the king's *liaison* was the result, from which daughter, Françoise, whom the father acknowledged as his. A marriage might have terminated this illicit connexion; but the conspiracy against the life of Cardinalieu put an end to all such hopes of the mother by the flight of M. de Lorraine, who was seriously implicated in the plot. "When a man neglects, another picks up;" in this instance, not one but many men were ready to step into the exiled nobleman's shoes. Madame de Lorraine returned to her wanderings and triumphs, and with them to her love-intrigues. *Elle faisoit*, writes the *Fameuse Comédienne*, speaking of a particular period, *la bonne fortune de jeunes gens de Languedoc*.

In the spring of 1644 she became pregnant for the second time. The babe is

its father has been much insisted upon. As a rule, the offspring has some inkling, if only from hearsay, of the identity of its male progenitor, but in this instance there was not even an attempt at information. Armande was left in profound ignorance all the days of her life. Her mother—and there is no doubt that Madeleine was in reality such—did not claim the girl as her own, but left the task to her who should, in the nature of things, have taken the place of grandam. Why this mystery and falsification of facts? The reason is not far to seek.

Richelieu was dead. Louis XIII. soon followed his prime minister. A new King is on the throne; the persecuted of former days become the powerful of the present. M. de Modena had returned from his exile.

Was it likely that Madeleine should leave him in Paris, without repairing thither herself? But again, being on the point of becoming a mother, could she expose herself to the probable and well-deserved reproaches for her fresh gallantries, for the culpable infidelity of which her pregnancy was the undoubted proof, could she jeopardize the hope that still remained of marrying the father of her first child, and becoming the Baroness de Modena? The return to Paris is therefore delayed until the latest *faux pas* can be concealed. The interest of the whole family is

Françoise was born, perceiving w
this birth would be for the hoped-
had not affected the severe or th
from it. She showed herself an ac
and *complaisante* grandmother, and
mother to the baby, the same as if
born in holy wedlock. This time sl
less accommodating, but it shall be
fashion. In 1638 she promoted th
she assisted in the consecrating of
might be useful; in 1644 she will
efficiently still in concealing a birth
dangerous. She allows herself to b
as the mother of the babe at i
Armande is acknowledged as her
Madeleine shall meet M. de Moden
one—the little Françoise. Instead
another daughter she shall simply ha
sister. And—"assurance must be n
sure." There may still be a suspiciou
improbable

Consequently the child must be kept hidden somewhere. Her existence must not even be whispered of, that no breath of scandal may rest upon Madeleine.

When everything is satisfactorily arranged, the Bédards, less the youngest born, appear in Paris, towards the end of 1644, where Madeleine endeavours to regain over M. de Modena a sway somewhat weakened by absence. Meanwhile she must live; so she joins her troupe to that of Molière, which had already been performing for some time, with scant success it appears, under the pompous title of the "Illustre Théâtre." She had been acquainted with the young actor-manager for some years before; but it is not true that he was drawn into the profession for love of her, as Tallemant and Bayle have asserted. Madeleine and Jean-Baptiste Poquelin may have flirted together, but there are positive proofs that the acquaintance at that period was of the flimsiest kind, and that his inborn genius alone drove the latter to the stage.

If we have given at some length the history of Madeleine Bédard, previous to her partnership with Molière, it is because we wanted to vindicate the great playwright's memory from the unfounded charge, so often brought against it, of marrying his own daughter. Some ultra *good* people—and there have been always such—the

words of Milton to the Duke of York. The latter asked him, "Did he not think blindness was a punishment sent by the Almighty for having written against Charles the First?" "If," said the poet, "our chastisements are already here on earth according to our crimes, how terrible ones your father must have committed! I have only lost my eyes, while he lost his head."

But to return to Madeleine Béjart, moments longer.

Her intentions with regard to her lover were but partly realized. The marriage was renewed, for a second time a man perhaps contemplated, but Fate was against her. If Venus had been content with her amongst her votaries, Hymen objected probably on grounds of respectability. The Baron suddenly departed with the Duke to Rome. Madeleine, thinking that she might have been able to follow him,

the hope of picking up a Crown, involved his friend in his ruin. Both found nothing but disappointment, and two years' imprisonment.

When the news reached Madeleine she resolved to wait no longer. The perambulations through the provinces are resumed, and this time Molière, who is the avowed successor of M. de Modena, is of the company. The left-handed union was no longer a new one. It dated from almost the moment they entered upon their theatrical partnership in Paris; which had been pretty successful, if not financially, at least professionally. As for the sentiment underlying the *liaison*, it probably sprung from the fancy of the hour; there seems to have been very little of serious or impassioned feeling in it. It was continued without the intervention of a priest, both being no doubt of the opinion, so very wittily expressed by Beaumarchais, some hundred and twenty years later, that, "of all serious things, marriage was probably the drollest."

Nor did Molière's connexion with Madeleine prevent him from indulging in a few nice little love intrigues under the very nose of his mistress, notably that one at Pézenas, where Lothario was obliged to jump out of a window

" Dans le simple appareil,
D'un homme que l'on vient d'arracher au sommeil."

to escape the well merited anger of an infuriated

to Paris for a third and last affection of that gentleman, accompanying her, and sharing half-rati

He does not mind it much, but self with the friendship of several whose acquaintance he has made. He is no longer the obscure str but the rising artist, well received circles. Chapelle, one of the lit period, gives us a graphic description symposia at *La Croix de Lorraine*. Parisian "Mermaid Tavern," who occasion—

"Molière buvoit ass
Pour, vèrs le soir, être en gogue

But the company did not make a the capital. Madeleine's schemes M. de Modena into the matrimonial successful. The intimacy may be renewed for a while, but without pro nltimate hope.

Here ends the romance of Madeleine Béjard, and that of Molière may be said to commence. Not the most interesting part, the prologue merely, in which the passionate sufferings of the hero are not even foreshadowed.

A few months later there appears upon the scene a little girl of about seven years old. It is Armande, of whom we have spoken before, and who until then had been kept out of sight. There is no longer any motive for concealment. What might have proved an encumbrance as long as the chances with M. de Modena were at least problematical, becomes now a source of joy to the mother, who about this time appears to have lost her first-born, the little daughter Françoise, as henceforth we find no trace of her. Be that as it may, certain is it that towards the end of 1650, Armande is taken away from her nurse, "who," we read in the *Fameuse Comédienne*, "was a very worthy woman, and had conceived a tender affection for the child, from whom she was grieved to part to entrust her to the mother, and to expose her to the hardships of a company of strolling players." Fortunately there were no hardships, and the little lady becomes the pet of the company, *le vrai enfant du régiment*, Molière taking the part of Sulpizzio. From the first, his whole heart seems to have gone out to her. When the mother grumbles, it is he who

cheers and caresses, when the mother threatens to punish, it is he who is ready to defend. He becomes in truth the father. He is the Arnolphe to this Agnès. The *Ecole des Femmes* is not written yet, but its prologue is enacted every day. He loves his ward, and, like Arnolphe, he lays the foundation of all the heartburnings and jealousies, which later on we find so graphically portrayed in the *Misanthrope*, in the unhappiness of Alceste with Célimène.

To every human being there is allotted by Heaven at his birth a certain fund of affection, which he is left free to bestow upon whomsoever or upon whatsoever he pleases. It is like the sum of money, large or small, which every one, be he never so poor, handles during the course of his life. The capital of love partakes of the vicissitudes of capital of gold and silver. With some it is barely sufficient to provide for their daily wants, and these go through their earthly pilgrimage pinched and starved because they cannot invest enough to insure themselves a decent dividend whereon to subsist. In plainer words, they lack the love which must be given to raise a corresponding amount in a woman's breast. We might amplify and elaborate this simile *ad infinitum*, but will confine ourselves simply to one more instance. Others again come into this world with an enormous capital of love

at their disposal. Many sink it at once, at an early period, in marriage, and obtain safe interest, often disproportionate, with which they content themselves; but there is a second section of these capitalists, who act quite differently. They begin by meddling with some of their capital in all kinds of showy and ephemeral concerns, drawing high returns for the time being, but at a great risk, while they still have another fund, which is lying fruitless. They also, at last sink the whole of their treasures into one venture, and then it becomes valuable as a provision, unless the venture turn out a failure, and leave them beggared for ever.

The latter case was Molière's. No man was ever endowed with a larger store of affection than he. It was a positive plethora. Was it a wonder then that a *liaison* with a Madeleine Béjard should scarcely effect a decrease in the stock? The niche in his great heart was occupied, but not filled. The piano score of an opera may give us an idea of the music, but it requires a whole personnel and orchestra to know the sublimity of the composition. And with Molière Madeleine was at best but a supernumerary in that tragedy of the passions which he was to play in its entirety before he died. It was reserved for Madeleine's daughter, through the mighty power of Molière's love for her, to supply the whole of

the *dramatis personæ*. But as yet this daughter was a child. The investment of Molière's affection in her was as so many promissory bills, to be discharged at a future time, but making no calls upon his resources for the time being. What more than that he should seek a temporary refuge for these hoarded treasures, temporarily, for he foresees already that not long hence they will have to be withdrawn and sunk into his union with Armande, and absorb them all, like a Danaïde vat, without leaving a trace that they have been poured down. And the first candidate for part of that capital presents herself in the shape of Catherine Leclerc, better known by her professional name of Mademoiselle de Brie, the only woman who ever understood and sincerely loved him. Madeleine's share, such as it is, is still retained, the same as the banker allows a small amount of his money and his name to remain in a firm with which he has long been associated, but in which he no longer feels an interest.

Mademoiselle de Brie's husband was a thorough *mauvais sujet*, a gambler, a swash-buckler—in fact, a good-for-nothing. With truth she might have often said of him, "He beats me and I rail at him: O, worthy! would it were otherwise—that I could beat him, while he railed

at me." Often and often Molière had to take the wife's part against the husband, and if "pity be akin to love," gratitude for defence such as this involuntarily becomes love itself. Soon there springs up between these two a feeling of sympathy, an ardent friendship, that might well be mistaken for the other passion at first, and which, when some of its inaugural violence has abated, leaves a *camaraderie* as sterling as betwixt men, but softened by a charm inseparable from the constant companionship with a lovely woman. When in after times Molière comes to her repulsed by a new flame, Mademoiselle Duparc, Catherine neither reproaches him, nor seeks to irritate his nascent passion. She is ready to forgive and go on loving. Heart-stricken and sore when he leaves her to marry Armande, she neither upbraids nor grieves him with lamentations. As if with a prophetic feeling for the future sufferings of her idol, she becomes his friend, ready at all times to sympathise with his misfortunes.

Such devotion does not pass unrewarded with a man of Molière's heart. Consequently she remains his *confidante*. When his wife deceives, betrays him, when his sorrows become unbearable, he finds in her the faithful friend who binds up his heart's wounds, who inspires him with hope, who fosters his illusions about the

return to duty of the guilty one, fully aware that it is the kindest thing to do. This constant affection, these recurrent pilgrimages for consolation, are somewhat surprising to his male companions. They wish to argue the character of this staunch comrade of the other sex. But his answer sets all their cavillings at naught.

“Assuredly,” is his reply, “I am aware she has her faults, no one is without; but I know hers, and am accustomed to them. It would be too troublesome to accommodate myself to another’s imperfections. I have neither time nor patience for them.

While performing at Lyons, Molière meets with Mademoiselle Duparc. As we said before, the first ardent feeling for Mademoiselle de Brie had abated; her claims in the eyes of our comedian were not of the kind which would justify him, to use a vulgar phrase, to “put all the eggs into one basket.” But far different is it with the new comer. Not only is he ready to offer all his hitherto dormant passion, but the other shares would have been offered too, had Mademoiselle Duparc cared to accept them. But she refused the advances of the rising genius, who was fascinated by her talents and beauty, consenting, though, to be one of his troupe, with which she remained until it finally

took up its abode in Paris in 1658, whither we will now follow it. A few words about Mademoiselle Duparc : she refused a Molière to be less cruel to a Racine, whose mistress she became, and who decoyed her from the former's company to make her enter that of the "Hôtel de Bourgogne." It is even said that pique prompted her to this step, having reconsidered her decision as regards Molière's offer of love, and being now willing to relent to her former wooer. But the available capital was once more engaged, and in a very humble affair this time, with a Mademoiselle Menou.

It is from a letter of Chapelle, written a month or two before the period we speak of, when Molière and his troupe are still in the provinces, that we get an insight to this "*complication de tendresses*," as its witty author calls these love-intrigues, and the jealousies arising from them. In fact, without Chapelle we would hardly know of them, nor of the latest addition to the comedian's seraglio, unless it were from an old copy of the *Andromeda* in the possession of a French bibliophile, M. de Soleine. Thanks to this rare book, we discover that Mademoiselle Menou was a member of the company when they played the last-named piece, in which she performed the subordinate part of the Nereïd Ephyra. This would be hardly sufficient to create a very lively

interest in her, did not Chapelle's epistle come opportunely to stimulate it. From this letter we are led to infer that Mademoiselle Menou must have been quite a young girl, a fresh, unsophisticated beauty, the very one who captivated the fancy of such a man as our author-character, who later on sets his whole heart, and the whole store of his love to another woman—his wife.

Men of Molière's age are mostly pleased with those amours which all permit them to protect while loving, and thus to their happiness to feel that the weakness of their mistress is ready to trust to the strength of her lover for support. Besides, the distrust born from observation and experience, seems to find a delight and a haven of rest in evoking these precocious passions, where the age of her who shares them seems to provide a guarantee of innocence. If, therefore, Molière loves the modest Ephyra, it is on account of her humble station, which proves so delightful a contrast to the grand airs of his other actresses—I had almost said his other sultanas.

Chapelle's letter leaves us to suppose all this. It speaks of the sprouting green of spring, which—

“ Jeune et foible rampe par bas
 Dans le fond des près, et n'a pas
 Encor la vigueur et la force
 De pénétrer la tendre écorce

Du saule qui lui tend les bras.
La branche amoureuse et fleurie,
Pleurant pour ses naissant appas,
Tout en séve et larmes, l'en prie
Et jalouse de la prairie
Dans cinq ou six jours se promet
De l'attirer à son sommet."

Chapelle continues: "You will show these pretty verses only to Mademoiselle Menou, for they apply but to you and to her." He further recommends him not to let his "other women folks" see them, "on account of certain stanzas which are not altogether in praise of them. I have written them as a reply to that particular sentence in yours, where you go into particulars of the annoyance caused by the bickerings of your three great actresses anent the distribution of your rôles. You want all your wits in conducting their vagaries, and I can compare you best to Jupiter during the siege of Troy. You may remember the fix this master of all the gods was in, &c. &c."

We can well imagine the charm and peace our author found in the sweet companionship of Mademoiselle Menou. But he was obliged to forego it, for a few months later we find her gone. We do not know who was instrumental in having her sent away, but may take it for granted that her rivals were at the bottom of the ostracism. It wanted determination and

courage, but Molière bore himself bravely, fully armed with his sweet temper and philosophy, and thanks to that system which made him patient under all his *ennuis*, even profiting by them in the furtherance of his art by turning them into a source of study and observation.

Already in his first pieces the result of these studies is plainly seen. They are filled with the contrasted characters of the three ladies, whom he was enabled to sketch from life, especially in their quarrels, of which he paid the cost. We have their living portraits in *Don Garcie de Navarre*. We have Dona Elvira, who dislikes being the object of jealousy—a sly reference of the author to his mortifications when paying his court to Mademoiselle Duparc—while Madeleine plays the rôle of Elise, who has no objection to having such a tribute paid to her charms. Unfortunately, she is no longer of an age to inspire that sentiment. In the *Facheux*, Orante, another part of the same kind, and agreeing with Mademoiselle Duparc's tendencies, is allotted to her, while Mademoiselle de Brie is cast for a character altogether opposite, Climène, in which her amiable qualities have full scope. For she appears to have been a charming, worthy woman; hence in the *Misanthrope*, to which we shall often refer, he gives her the most thankful part, Eliante, with whom he seeks consolation when Célimène has deceived and

cast him off. Arsinoë, the termagant, though she is no longer there to represent the character, is meant again for Duparc, to whom are set down all the disagreeable and venomous speeches. Célimène is Armande, his wife, who is quite content to have done with her honourable, though stern lover, and gives him plainly to understand that he is at liberty to forget her. *Eh, puis je le, traîtresse*, is the answer. No, thou couldst not leave her, good and kind soul! It would have been well for thee hadst thou been able.

Armande has meanwhile grown into a beautiful girl of sixteen, living in Molière's house, and being educated by the great man himself. Every advantage that Nature had endowed her with was turned into an accomplishment. By-and-by we shall see a portrait of her, sketched by the loving hand of the author of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. She had a beautiful voice, could sing in French and Italian, was witty in her conversation, and though not altogether handsome, could set her prettiness off to such an advantage, by the help of her *coiffure* and *toilette*, that the absence of more striking beauty was amply compensated for. Aided by the counsels of such a master, Armande made rapid progress in the art for which she was intended, and to which, it should be said, she

was devoted from her infancy. Finding her sufficiently prepared for her *débuts*, Molière writes the small part of Léonore in *l'Ecole des Maris* for her. He is impatient to show her to this public, who, without knowing it, have already become the confidant of the great comedian, to whom he henceforth relates every evening, by means of fictitious characters and imaginary intrigues, his hopes and fears, his sorrows and joys, even his own foibles, which he is far from ignoring.

Yes, he is proud of showing this pupil to the public, and the public as with one voice endorse the opinion of the master. They think Armande charming, with all the bloom and freshness of her sixteen summers upon her; with all the *naïve* coquetry of which she is already such a consummate mistress. She is applauded and encouraged, and more than one nobleman of the Court conveys in his look of admiration for the young actress a mixture of a quite different feeling. At the celebrated *fête de Vaux* she is loaded with homages, and her name is on every one's lips.

While congratulating himself and proudly elated with this success, Molière does not fail to remark, however, the precocious ease, the tender smiles and looks, the provoking coquetry of his pupil. He feels in his soul a foreboding of his

own future; this precious jewel may become a prey to these gentlemen *à la mode*; some one may rob him of this beautiful girl so long and so carefully tended and protected. Misgivings arose within him. He became jealous.

For Molière's affection had undergone a transformation as Armande grew from the pretty child into the blooming girl. Upon the first he had lavished friendship and protection; to the latter he gave his heart. He had often defended her against her own mother with the partiality of a fond father; now he took her defence as a devoted lover. His whole ardent and passionate nature was condensed in his adoration for her. Whatever she made him suffer in after years, whatever charges were brought against her, he never ceased to love her.

A sweet hope had long been his cherished, secret companion. Armande shall be his wife. He himself had watched over an education such as he deemed the best for a young girl. From the moment she came among the troupe he had never been absent from her for a day. He was aware of all her faults, he knew all her good qualities. His dream would be realised. He would find a heart at last that would respond to his own, that would beat in unison with it. What a calm, peaceful existence, charmed by his labours, without cares or outer troubles, he

imagined for himself. What repose in the anticipated bliss.

His friends told him, nay he told himself, when once his marriage had been resolved upon, that Armande was seventeen, and that he was forty, that she was given to coquetry and flirtation, and fond of gaiety. They asked him whether it was prudent to marry this young girl? Did he expect to occupy the exclusive place in Armande's heart? Could he brighten her existence sufficiently? He, the *great dreamer*, who was rarely known to smile, save on the boards of his theatre, and who at home remains pensive and immersed in study the whole day? He, more than any other, understood the unhappiness caused by ill-assorted marriages; he that so often held them up to ridicule in his comedies. He, therefore, more than any other, should be careful, and reflect, and examine dispassionately and exhaustively. But all these sound arguments, when passed in review before him, were met by Molière's answer, "I know Armande, I have tended her, and watched over her when a baby among the properties of the mountebanks, I have brought her up as Ariste of the *School for Husbands* brought up Léonore, without cares, without restraint. Even now she is free to choose; if she consent to become my wife, the trifling imperfections of the young girl will soon

disappear amidst the peaceful delights of a serious and settled existence, amidst the daily duties, taught to her by reason ; they will be driven forth by the gratitude for the lot in life I have prepared for her." Thus he replied, lulling his misgivings and those of his friends to sleep with illusions, this too-confiding heart.

And yet at times his illusions vanished, and he saw the wretchedness of his future in all its nakedness. Not one pang was spared him, for the sufferings of presentiment preceded the agony of reality. Let it be said, once for all, there was no make-believe in Armande, conscious or unconscious. The child gave ample promise of these vices, which were to be developed in the woman. Every trick and wile of coquetry, seen in full bloom in Célimène, might be perceived in the bud in Agnès. Molière was not deceived, but caught in a trap, which he knew to be there, but thought himself able to circumvent. If previous to being the Célimène of the *Misanthrope*, Armande was the Agnès of the *School for Wives*, Molière was also the Arnolphe before he was the Alceste, and what is more he was fully aware of the fact.

Molière had accurately measured the difference in their ages, he had correctly represented to himself the disadvantage of his twenty-three years of seniority, or, rather let us say, of her

twenty-three years of want of stability. He had gauged everything, foreseen all, and expressed his forebodings. Don Garcie de Navarre, the precursor of Alceste, who is already Molière himself, had become the mouthpiece of these fears.

“L’hymen ne peut nous joindre, et j’abhorre des nœuds,
Qui deviendraient sans doute un enfer pour tous deux.”

Let us, therefore, not forget, by-and-by, when our indignation shall be roused against the woman, who tramples under foot every wifely duty, who plays false with every feeling of an honest heart, that Molière had his share in the unhappiness which he created for himself, that he attempted the nearly impossible, and failed.

For the very year after he had given vent to the above quoted lines, at the very time when he was composing a more complete expression still of his misgivings, when he was putting the finishing touches to the *School for Wives*, he married Armande.

Such of our readers as take sufficient interest in the hero of these pages, to wish to know what he was like at the time of his ill-fated marriage, we refer to a splendid portrait in the Dulwich Gallery, which is a copy of the original by Mignard, now in the possession of the Comédie-Française. But to those whose time and inclination fail them for such an excu-

sion, a pen-and-ink sketch may not be altogether unwelcome. It is by Mademoiselle Poisson, an actress in his troupe. "Neither too stout nor too thin, he was rather tall than short, had a noble carriage, and a well-formed leg. He walked along quite gravely, with a very serious air. His nose was somewhat thick, his mouth large, with full lips, his complexion dark, the eyebrows black and strongly marked, which gave the features, when the face was in full play, an irrepressibly comic expression by their almost incessant mobility." These features, which Molière knew how to render animated by an almost perfect art, contributed powerfully to his success as an actor; and in this respect the unanimous testimony of his contemporaries may be taken as perfectly true—viz., that in his own line he was as an actor absolutely without a rival.

Molière's house was kept on a splendid footing. His fortune was spent in charity and receptions. His retinue was numerous, his table open to all comers, and his way of living partook neither of the sordid meanness of the ordinary citizen, nor of the silly vulgar display of the parvenu.

This was the man to whom Armande Béjard had just been bound by indissoluble ties. After the wedding he, accompanied by his wife, followed the King to St. Germain, and the first weeks of their union were at least spent in happiness.

Molière had no longer anything to wish for. As for Armande, did she at this moment love her husband? It is difficult to answer this question, to gauge her heart too deeply. As there is no proof to the contrary, let us charitably suppose that she did, were it only out of gratitude or from pride at bearing a name deservedly honoured, and the glory of which she was sharing at that moment.

Sheridan says, "When an old bachelor marries a young girl, the fault carries its own punishment."

"Agreed," says the reader; "we knew that without the author of the *School for Scandal* telling us. What new theory do you deduce from it?"

No theory whatsoever, simply a bit of advice to the newly married of yesterday, of to-day; to those who, fresh from church or registrar's office, conceive the hope of keeping their wives all to themselves; to those who, at the sight of other people's misfortunes, have said, "This shall not happen to me."

We address the sailors who, having seen the wreck of many a vessel, put out to sea; those bachelors who, after having scuttled many a conjugal bark, dare get married themselves. And this is our advice, it is eternally new, it is eternally old. A man, forty or fifty, in love or

not, as the case may be, has just become the owner, by virtue of a contract duly executed and registered in the church, the vestry, and in heaven, of a young girl with splendid auburn tresses, magnificent dark and limpid eyes, tiny feet, small white taper-fingered hands, cherry lips and pearly teeth, well formed, just ripening into womanhood, fresh and appetizing, white as a lily, endowed with every attribute of beauty; her lowered eyelashes resemble the spindles in a flower; her skin, smooth as the corolla of a white camellia, is slightly streaked with the purple of the red one; on her virginal tint the eye seems to trace the bloom and imperceptible down of the newly-gathered peach, the azure veins distil a rich warmth that intoxicates; she is all joy and love, all gentleness and naïveté. She loves her husband, or at least she imagines she does.

This husband says to himself, "Her eyes shall behold no one but me; this mouth shall quiver with love but for me; this soft hand shall dispense its voluptuous caresses only on me; this bosom shall but swell at my voice; this slumbering soul shall wake at no will but mine; I alone shall stroke these brilliant tresses; I alone shall smooth this ivory brow; I will take Death himself to guard the nuptial couch from the ravisher; the polluted altar of love shall

swim in the gore of the intruder or in mine. Peace, honour, bliss, paternal ties, the happiness of my children, everything is there, and I will defend it as a lioness defends her cubs. Woe to him who shall attempt to put his foot in my lair!"

Connubial Hercules, we applaud your resolution; we admire your self-imposed labours. Your mythical prototype undertook some that were probably less arduous; but then he only counted upon himself, while you reckon upon the co-operation of your partner. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link; and the weakest link in the matrimonial cable is the wife. Up to the present no geometrician has attempted to trace the longitudinal and latitudinal lines of the conjugal ocean. The old salts have fought shy of indicating the shoals, the quicksands, the breakers, the currents, because they were ashamed of their wrecks. This is the advice: Sheridan says, "When an old bachelor marries a young girl, the fault carries its own punishment." Shakspeare says, "A young man married is a man marred." Consequently, there is a fit age for man to take unto himself a wife, which should not be overstepped one way or the other. But when he does overstep that limit, there may still be found a way of eluding the punishment. History tells us, that when Ahasuerus wished to take unto himself a wife from among the damsels of Persia, he selected Esther as the most virtuous and

beautiful. His ministers must, therefore, have been possessed of a secret by which to test the spinster population. Unfortunately, the Bible, generally so clear upon all matrimonial questions, has neglected to transmit us this recipe for conjugal election. In the absence of the Biblical recipe, Burchell, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, is content to watch and study the peculiarities and fitness of his intended wife for at least two years. Until, therefore, the Biblical theory has been discovered by some antiquarian explorer, and unless a man be content to imitate Burchell, and to profit by his watching, we advise every intending Benedict, who has passed the meridian of life, not to try to couple autumn and spring. He should know that summer should be the connexion between them, and that when his own has vanished, even such a good simulacrum as an Indian one cannot ripen the germs of affection into ideal love, unless the woman has within herself these fertilizing influences from her all-powerful passion for the man with whom she had cast in her lot.

This all-powerful passion was certainly wanting in Armande Béjard, and Molière, as keen an observer as Burchell, could not have mistaken the sentiment that prompted her in marrying him. To us it is easily understood. It was gratitude. "When gratitude has become a matter of reasoning, there are many ways of

escaping its bonds." What this process of reasoning may have been in a mind like Armande's it would be difficult to say; but it probably resulted in the giving herself to her guardian, without thinking much of the duties and obligations incumbent upon such a step. And again we have to make allowances for her peculiar position, and the temptations it involved.

Actresses have from the time there were actresses been the favourite quarry of *grand seigneurs*; they have always been courted, and the period we write of was no exception to the rule. The bare title of actress suffices to give a woman a fictitious, but none the less exaggerated, value in some men's eyes; apart from any talent she may possess in support of the title. The false halo which in many cases the stage confers, stamps her as one to be *bought* at any price. Fashion is no doubt the principal cause of this continued mania, but a more vulgar feeling underlies the custom. The first silly fledgeling noble or vulgar unbearable parvenu that bought an actress, purchased a sham-testimonial and advertisement for his quack-manhood, which was beneath notice for the honest editorial column.*

* I wish it to be distinctly understood that I intend no disrespect to the honourable female members of an honourable profession, who have won their way to fame by hard work and unquestioned talent, as distinct from those whose question-

Hence it became a mark of honour to be admitted to the *petit lever* of *la Molière*, as eagerly sought as the honour of being present at the king's; she was loaded with flatteries and presents; at every instant some one was metaphorically laying "his heart at her feet." Very soon she gathered a little court around her, "and from that moment," says a contemporary, "she thought herself a duchess."

Her husband was on the watch, and remonstrated with her. But his remonstrances were easily overcome by her cajoleries. A time came, however, when he could no longer close his eyes to the fact that he had fully entered into that inheritance, so quaintly left to him by Paul Scarron, which bequest is embodied in the line at the beginning of this chapter, *A Molière je lègue le cocuage*. The author of *Le Roman Comique* had not meant it in that way, though. He intended him to be the scourger, not the scourged. He intended him to make comic capital out of the breaking of the seventh commandment; he did not mean him to be the one held up to ridicule.

Two years after the marriage there was no

able morality has been the only means of bringing them before the public. I may add the judgment of a friend with whom I discussed the above and this paragraph. He said, "In England especially some women have fallen because they are on the stage, many more are on the stage because they have fallen."

longer any restraint on Armande's part. In 1664, Molière gave for the first time his *Princess of Elis*. Armande played the principal rôle. Her talent, fully matured by this time, obtained for her a success, which altogether turned her head. She became intoxicated with the honours of the greatest nobles at the Court. But among them all she preferred the Comte de Guiche, who engrossed with his love for Henrietta, daughter of Charles I., showed such an indifference, that from pure pique, she lent a willing ear to the proposals of the Duke de Lauzun and others. The Abbé de Richelieu, nephew of the Cardinal, an unsuccessful aspirant for Armande's favours, intercepted an implicating letter, the divulging of which showed the poor husband the full extent of his misfortunes.

A mortal blow to him, who now foresees with certainty what he had long been reluctant to believe; that from this time the fate of the Sganarelle of the *School for Husbands* is to be his own lot.

On the morrow he writes a letter to his friend, the physician Jacques Rohault, which concludes with the following words, "I am the most wretched of men, my wife does not love me."

Henceforth this is the refrain of all his comedies. The protégé of the *grand monarque*, whom the crowd salutes as the greatest actor of his epoch, who, unaided, creates comedy in France,

and elevates it to a height it has never attained since; the poet, living in a world of immortal creations, feasted and courted by the most illustrious of this illustrious age; this man, rich, still young, who amuses the whole town with his satire and wit, sits wretched by his solitary hearth when the stage dress is doffed, when the paint is washed off, when the audience has dispersed, when the doors are locked. He bows the head and weeps bitter tears.

It is, however, not the celebrated author whom we have to study, it is the man himself whom we seek, and nowhere can we find him better than in his master passion, love.

If among the many admired works there are some in which the human feeling bursts forth stronger than in the others, in which *the bitter laughter* of which Boileau spoke, after having seen the *Misanthrope*, becomes strident, it is because in those works there is more of himself, of his love, with all its bitterness, with all its grief, with all its despair. For this grief is too powerful to be concealed. We meet with it everywhere, now almost silent, then again breaking out into homeric laughter, for however careful to hide it, he is not always successful, but he never forgets his art, which is to amuse. He does with his agony what Frederick Lemaitre did with *Robert Macaire*. He converts a tragedy into a farce.

From one of the first to one of the last of his comedies we can never altogether lose sight of the admirable man, too oppressed by his own thoughts not to give vent to them in what he writes, but also too good and kind-hearted to communicate their bitterness, and therefore applying himself to translate into smiles all his secret, melancholy sorrows. Had Molière been but a wit or humorist as was Dryden, the biting satire would have cost him but little; it would have been the natural expression of his sufferings; but he was a man of heart also, and as gall never emanates from the heart, there is none found in his works. He feels what he owes to the world, that his mission is to instruct it, but there is an inexpressible reluctance to make it the witness of his trials in all their heartrending nakedness, so he merely exposes that which may serve the world as a lesson in the guise of amusement. His own thoughts and feelings are bitter enough, but in passing through his lips they are invested with the honey of which his whole nature is brimful. Thus even in the *Misanthrope* where he is altogether one with his pains, we find, save for some of these bursts of despairing laughter, of which we spoke just now, nothing but the expression of a grief which fears to become contagious by exposing itself too much, which prefers to be laughed at rather than to be pitied, and at the bottom of which we perceive far less

of the hatred of evil than of regret at the absence of good. Though at this juncture he might have justly burst into sobs, for he suffered every ill that a loving soul could suffer.

As a husband he was odiously deceived; as a poet he was cruelly persecuted. His *Tartuffe* was slandered and criticised by false devotees; as a friend he was betrayed, Racine abandoned him to go over to the *Hôtel de Bourgogne*, taking with him his tragedy of *Alexander*, that had been presented already several times on Molière's stage, and decoying one of his best actresses, Mdlle. Duparc into following. As if all this were not enough; the disease which was to cost him his life a few years later, began to show itself and to torture him, and as his actors could do nothing without him he was obliged to suspend his representations for two months.

And yet, where others under similar circumstances would have created a tragedy from their woes, he creates but a comedy. Well might Alceste answer, when his friends tell him how amusing he is: *Par la sambleu, messieurs, je ne croyais pas être si plaisant que je suis.* It may be truly said of Molière what was said of Henri Quatre, *Son courage riait.*

If Molière could thus treat his profoundest griefs, it may be easily understood with what facility he could make sport of the minor vexations of love, of these trifling annoyances

spoken of before, and which seem to have been the daily incidents of his numerous and various amours. Hence his comedies show in more than one scene the reflection and the echo of them. Eraste, of the *Dépit Amoureux*, in the quarrel scene and its subsequent reconciliation, is Molière himself; and Gros-René, with Marianne, is Molière once more. In *Tartuffe*, Valère, bickering with Marianne,* for the pleasure of making it up afterwards, is Molière again; and in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Cléonte, in the sulks with Lucile, but awaiting a smile only to kiss and be friends, is Molière, ever Molière.

And mark you, reader, he is growing old already at that time, it is but three years before his death; but though he has learnt much of the sorrows of love, he has forgotten none of its delights. His heart is an inexhaustible well of tenderness, which even the conduct of his wife can neither choke nor dry up. Notwithstanding his age, despite his forty-eight years, he still believes himself the youthful swain, not from coxcombry, but because his love for Armande is ever youthful in his breast.

It is Armande who gives him the repartee for

* The first part of this scene Molière undoubtedly owes to the one which, in our essay on Lope de Vega, we translated from *Dorothea*, but with this difference, that what is hard and bitter in the Spanish dramatist's translation of his personal experiences, is smooth and sweet in the Frenchman's.

this charming bit of love-making in *Tartuffe*, if not on the stage, at least at home, where these kind of tiffs are but too frequent, and not always followed by a reconciliation. The audience might have been left in doubt as to the real personages represented by the imaginary characters in this particular scene, while in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* such a doubt was no longer possible. Molière seems as it were to take a cruel pleasure in painting Armande's portrait as the Lucile who fascinates and grieves Cléonte at the same time.

We produce the conversation between the master and his servant textually. The former is inviting the latter to say all the harm he can of his (the master's) sweetheart.*

"She's got small eyes," says Covielle.

"True," replies Cléonte, "her eyes are small, but they are full of fire most brilliant and piercing, and the most sympathetic I have ever seen."

"She has a large mouth," adds Covielle.

"Yes; but it unfolds charms for which you might seek in vain in other mouths, and this mouth, on beholding it, inspires one with desires; it is the most attractive, the most amorous, in creation."

* There is a similar scene in *Dorothea*, after the lover and his mistress have parted, and where the former invites Julio to criticise the lady, objecting throughout to every detail.

"She is not tall."

"No ; but she is lithe and well formed."

"As for her wit——"

"She has some, Covielle, and of the finest and most delicate——"

"She is always so grave——"

"Would you have her indulge in boisterous joviality, or wear her heart upon her sleeve ; and is there aught more annoying than those women who giggle on every occasion?"

"But, after all, she is as whimsical as one can well be."

"Yes, she is whimsical, I agree with you there ; but everything is becoming in the fair ones, we submit to everything from them."

And Molière, of whom this last word is the cry of anguish, submitted to everything from Armande, not as one who does not know better—he could not very well be such—but as a martyr. About this time, if we are to believe a tradition transmitted to us by Grimarest, at the period of the first performance of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, which, as we know, took place at Chambord in 1670 ; at the very moment when he gave that loving portrait as a token of some temporary reconciliation, Armande deceived him more cruelly than ever. All the resources of her coquettish nature were put into play with some *seigneurs* of the Court, and her husband, who

had experienced their influence, seems to have been afraid to speak of them. It is the only trait which is wanting to the sketch, but even if the wife's conduct had not taught us all the arts and wiles of which she was so completely mistress, others, who had not the same motives for discretion, have described them to the utmost detail. "She was the airiest and most expert flirt and coquette imaginable. There was no trick or subterfuge with which she was not conversant, and which she failed to employ as opportunity required. With Molière, the *contemplator* and the *melancholy*, as he has been called, she was grave and serious enough; he himself has told you this much, but with others, be certain that the pert madam had her playful and sprightly moods, which she could don and doff at will, and supplement and enhance by song and dance."

Thus speaks a contemporary of the *Fameuse Comédienne*, and we ask ourselves whether it was surprising that Molière made a complete study of the various lures of this siren, and that his comedies received the impress of his experience and the confidence of his sorrows.

For it was hard enough for this great man to suffer in sober earnest what he had so often turned into ridicule, and to find in the comic theme produced for the laughter of the crowd a subject of scalding, bitter tears for himself. If we

tell you that he wept, and derived consolation from his tears, we are violating no confidence, for he himself made no secret of it to his friends. A letter which he wrote to La Mothe le Vayer, *à propos* of the death of that gentleman's son, reveals to us what his comedies lead us to suspect—viz., the pleasure he derived from his tears, saying with Ovid, *est quædam flere voluptas*, and exhorting the bereaved father to try the remedy. For he cannot even avoid the woman who so tortures him. If he avoids her at home, he finds her back on the stage, with all her seductive arts and smiles. Besides, if he could, he probably would not, separate. With more truth than Cloten he might have exclaimed "I love and hate her." He leaves her the first-floor of his house, where, like Célimène, she received a good deal; while he, by his studies, like Alceste, tries to forget his griefs—unsuccessfully though, for they follow him everywhere. Every one of his comedies catches the echo of them. When with his friends his melancholy is such, that their remarks upon it nearly always bring about a confidence, in which he pours out the whole of his heart.

One day at his country house at Auteuil, Chapelle found him in such a frame of mind, and the confession of Molière has become the most authentic and curious page in the history of his love. "I am born," said he, "with the utmost

disposition to tenderness, and as all my efforts to overcome these loving inclinations have been of no avail, I endeavoured to make myself happy, at least as much as one can be with a sensitive heart like mine. I was convinced that there were very few women deserving of a sincere attachment; that self-interest, ambition, vanity, supply the motives of all their intrigues. I wanted the innocence of my choice to be the guarantee of my happiness; I have taken my wife, as it were, from the cradle. I imagined that through habit I could imbue her with feelings not to be destroyed by time, and I omitted nothing to gain my end. . . . Marriage did not cool my attentions; but I found her in a short time so indifferent, that I soon began to perceive the futility of my precautions, and that her feelings for me were far removed from what I could have wished to make me happy. I inwardly reproached myself upon a delicateness which seemed ridiculous, and I attributed to whim what in fact was nothing but the result of a want of affection for me. I had but too many convincing proofs of my error. From that moment I resolved to live with her as a gentleman lives with his wife who is a coquette, and who is but too well aware of the fact, though he may maintain that her wicked conduct ought not to become detrimental to his reputation.

“ Her presence made me forget all my resolutions, and the first words which she addressed to me in her defence left me so convinced that my suspicions were ill-founded, that I asked her forgiveness for having been so credulous. My kindness has not changed her. I have, therefore, made up my mind to live with her as if she were not my wife; but if you knew what I suffer, you would pity me. My passion has reached such a pitch that it concerns itself compassionately with her interests, and when I come to reflect how impossible it is for me to conquer my feeling for her, I tell myself at the same time that she experiences perhaps the same difficulty to overcome her bent to coquetry, and I find myself more inclined to pity than to blame her. You will say, no doubt, that one must be a poet to think like this; but as for myself, I think there is but one kind of love, and that people who have not experienced similar feelings of delicacy have never been really in love. Everything in this world bears a relation to her in my heart; my mind is so entirely occupied with her that in her absence I know of nothing that can divert me. When I behold her an emotion and transports more easily felt than expressed deprive me of the use of reflection; I have no longer eyes for her faults, they only remain to see what is amiable in her. Is it not the height of folly? and do

not you admire the fact that whatever reason is left to me serves only to show me my weakness, without the power of triumphing over it."

When two people meet and speak to one another each day, when one of these continually craves for the other's presence, the separation cannot be real; it wants but the accident of a smile or a word to bring about a reconciliation. This is what happened between Molière and his wife more than once. Reconciled for a word, a word was sufficient to embroil them again; and thus the modern *amabæan* chant, the story of Molière's love, takes up its thread once more, and winds through the dramatist's household, reappearing also in the shape of reminiscences in the masterpieces of the poet, in whom the man himself is never absent.

If he inserts in the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* the scene of which I spoke already; if in the *Amants Magnifiques* he intercalates that charming translation of Horace's ode, *Donec gratus eram tibi*, which is so little noticed there, it is because at the time when he writes these productions of his fast-waning life, he is still, as he was in his youth, under the constant influence of these scenes of pique, bickerings, and reconciliation, which he has so constantly experienced as a lover, which he experiences still more constantly as a husband.

...the representation of the
naire, his existence became a little
Concord had once more entered
It is recorded by Boileau, that
was composing *Les Femmes Savan*
dramatist a visit one day, and for
"to go out for a walk with his wife
bourgeois."

But shortly before his death the
brouille. He went back to his sec-
would, no doubt, have breathed his
complete isolation, without the le-
her whom he loved so devotedly,
vention of two friends had not b-
together once more. A simple det-
which flattered Armande's *amour*-
actress, and her vanity as a sing-
consent to play in the *Malade* 1
which her husband had just put
touches. Intending to offer t
Angélique to his wife —"

to Armande the delicacy of such a proceeding from so ill-treated a husband. This appeal might have been in vain, but the expectation of shining in a part expressly created for her decided her. The reconciliation took place on the night of the first performance. It did not come a moment too soon. On the day of the fourth representation Molière felt worse than usual (he had been suffering for fifteen years). His friends pressed him to stay at home, and not to appear in the piece in which he took the title-rôle, Argan. "How can I possibly do so," was his answer. "There are more than fifty poor workmen who have nothing but their day's work to live on. What are they to do if I do not play? I should reproach myself for having neglected to provide them with bread for a single day, while it was still in my power to do so." These words show the man, comment upon them would be wasted. They might have served as his epitaph. In the evening he went to the theatre, and, despite the most excruciating sufferings, performed his part to the last word, though towards the end of the piece it was feared he would have to be carried off the stage. But his heroic efforts prevailed over the first symptoms of crisis that set in.*

* At the end of the first act, when Argan is to receive his diploma as doctor, Molière was convulsed with a fit of coughing,

When the performance was over, he put on his dressing-gown, and made his way to the dressing-room of Baron, whom he asked what the public said of his piece. Baron answered that his pieces always proved better upon a closer examination, and that the oftener they were performed the more they were liked, "but," added he, "you seem to be worse than you were just now." "You are right," said Molière, "I have a cold which is killing me." Baron, after having chafed his hands, which were ice-cold, placed them in a muff to warm them; he sent for Molière's chair-porters to get him home as quickly as possible, accompanying him, lest an accident might befall his patron, from the Palais-Royal to the Rue de Richelieu, where he lived. When they reached his apartment, Baron recommended some beef-tea, of which Madame Molière had always a stock on hand for her own consumption, for she took great care of herself. But Molière objected. "No, no," he said, "my wife's beef-tea is like *aqua-fortis* to me, you know what a lot of different ingredients she puts into it, I would

which he heroically repressed. The arm-chair in which he was seated serves until this day at the Comedie-Française in the representations of *Le Malade Imaginaire*, and is known by the name of *Fauteuil de Molière*. When not used on the stage it is in the custody of the family, which, ever since the time of the great actor-poet, have supplied the first theatre in France with stage-doorkeepers.

sooner have a small piece of Parmesan cheese." Laforest, his servant, brought him some, which he ate with a little bit of bread; after which the servant and Baron assisted him to bed. Scarcely had he lain down before he sent to his wife for a pillow filled with certain herbs, which she had promised him in order to make him sleep. "Everything that does not enter the body I do not mind trying," he remarked, "but I am afraid of swallowing physic; I do not care to take anything which may shorten the little life left to me." A moment afterwards he began to cough violently, and to expectorate. He asked for the light to examine the contents of the vessel. "There is a change," he said, calmly. Baron, on seeing the blood he had just brought up screamed with fright. "Don't be alarmed," recommended Molière, "you have seen me bring up more than that. Still," he added, "go and tell my wife to come up." Meanwhile two sisters of charity, who were his annual guests when they came to Paris, remained at his bedside, rendering him all possible spiritual and bodily assistance. When Baron returned with Molière's wife, they found him dead, the blood having choked him. He died on the 17th February, 1673, at ten o'clock in the evening, and, curiously enough, on the anniversary of the death of Madeleine Béjard.

* * * *

Almost his last words were for the woman

who so cruelly deceived him, for as he himself confessed to Chappelle, he thought that there was but one kind of love. Such love gives itself, regardless of the least chance of return, it is an absolute devotion, a boundless, nay an unreasoning idolatry, unreasoning—not unreasonable—for it continues to worship, despite the knowledge of the worthlessness of the idol. It says in so many words—

“ I ask not, I care not,
If guilt's in thy heart;
I know that I love thee
Whatever thou art.”

It knows full well that all this lavishing of a true and loving heart's treasures count as nothing; that the utmost it can do is to go on loving; without being able in itself to evoke a corresponding passion. There are people who would think that such fanaticism must have at least the power of momentarily inflaming the idol, as the idolatry of Pygmalion warmed the marble heart of Galatea; nothing of all this. It is just because the occurrence is so rare that it has been embodied in a fable; for the ancients knew by inspiration of this ardent passion, and sang it, and in so doing made it the fashion of talk among the moderns, “whose experience,” says George Eliot, “has been by no means of a fiery demonic character.” “To have the consciousness suddenly steeped with another's personality,”

continues the great English novelist, "to have the strongest inclinations possessed by an image which retains its dominance in spite of change, and apart from worthiness—nay, to feel a passion which clings the faster for the tragic pangs inflicted by a cruel, recognised unworthiness—is a phase of love which in the feeble and common-minded has a repulsive likeness to a blind animalism, insensible to the higher sway of moral affinity or heaven-lit admiration. But when this attaching force is present in a nature not of brutish unmodifiableness, but of a human dignity that can risk itself safely, it may even result in a devotedness not unfit to be called divine in a higher sense than the ancient. Phlegmatic rationality stares and shakes its head at these unaccountable prepossessions, but they exist as undeniably as the winds and waves, determining here a wreck, and there a triumphant voyage."

In fiction, such lovers are represented by an Othello, an Orosmane, a St. Preux, a René, a Werther. But never did these imaginary characters or their authors know blind, absolute love as did Molière. Love is not to love a noble, sublime and humanly perfect creature. Any fool can do that. No, it is to say to yourself, "He or she whom I love is a miserable, infamous wretch who will deceive me, who is the outpouring of hell and all its vices." And then

after having said this to yourself, to return to the beloved and find in her or his presence all the earthly bliss, all the heavenly flowers of paradise. Such was Molière's love. To be convinced of it, go and see, or if you cannot, read his great scenes in *l'Ecole des Femmes*, in *Le Misanthrope*, in which Arnolphe and Alceste are Molière himself, in which their experiences are but the reflex of the poet's own bitter sufferings. To his alternating joys and sufferings we may safely apply the lines of Owen Meredith's *Canticle of Love*—

- “ I once heard an angel by night in the sky,
 Singing softly a song to a deep golden lute ;
 The pole star, the seven little planets, and I
 To the song that he sung listened mute.
 For the song that he sung was so strange and so sweet,
 And so tender the tones of his lute's golden strings,
 That the Seraphs of Heaven sat hushed at his feet,
 And folded their heads in their wings.
- “ And the song that he sung by those Seraphs up there
 Is called—“ Love.” But the words I had heard them else-
 where.
- “ For when I was last in the nethermost Hell,
 On a rock 'mid the sulphurous surges, I heard
 A pale spirit sing to a wild hollow shell,
 And his song was the same, every word.
 But so sad was his singing, all Hell to the sound
 Moan'd, and, wailing, complain'd like a monster in pain,
 While the fiends hover'd near o'er the dismal profound,
 With their black wings weigh'd down by the strain.
- “ And the song that was sung by the lost ones down there
 Is call'd—“ Love.” But the spirit that sung was Despair.”



A BACHELOR FROM CONVICTION.

SWIFT.

“ Abstinence sows sand all over
The ruddy limbs and flaming hair ;
But desire gratified
Plants fruits of life and beauty there.”
WILLIAM BLAKE, *Couplets and Fragments*.

“ Il y a une prudence supérieure à celle qu'on qualifie ordinairement de ce nom, elle consiste à suivre hardiment son caractère, en acceptant avec courage les désavantages, et les inconvénients qu'il faut produire.”—CHAMFORT.

“ Anders
. . . . als sonst in Menschenköpfen
Malt sich in diesem Kopf die Welt.”
SCHILLER.

ANTIQUITY, so rich in originals—we use the word here in its French and somewhat esoteric meaning—has probably no stranger characters to show than its philosophers. The collection bequeathed to us by Diogenes Laërtius is a real gallery of eccentrics. What, if not an eccentric, is that namesake of the antique author, that other Diogenes, who cynically rolls his domicile about the streets and market-place of Athens, flinging right and left his caustic

apothegms to the passers-by? What, if not an eccentric, is Pyrrho, who, reducing scepticism to practice, cannot stir save escorted by a crowd of friends, obliged to watch over his safety? What is Socrates himself, the prototype of all *flâneurs*, with his irresistible mania for embracing people and whispering oracular counsel into their ears? What are they but eccentrics, humorists, if you choose to use a milder term, to whom the common rules of life cannot be applied. To meet with anything like them, or their strange modes of living and utterance in after times, we must either ransack the works of the Bollandists where they treat of the lives of the mediæval saints, or else go to the more modern book of Mr. Timbs on *Eccentrics and Eccentricities*. If we come in contact with them in our daily existence, we have a faint suspicion—no matter how consistent their strange acts may be with certain philosophical theories they enunciate—that their place is in Bedlam, not among ourselves. Even Mr. Timbs writes of them as it were under protest; he would by much prefer to call them madmen than give them the appellation he has.

Because, fortunately for us, whatever doctrines a man—philosopher or not—may profess, he is content to live outwardly at least as other people; to refrain from singularities, to be in act and demeanour a man of the world. Especially

is this the case, and has been for some centuries, in England. With the exception of the members of one sect—and even they are gradually abandoning their antiquated costume—all Englishmen dress and walk alike. However God-fearing, they no longer stalk about as the typical Puritan, with their eyes in constant danger of darting upward from their sockets, or else tumbling into their uplifted nostrils; yellow elongated features are no longer ascribed to a pious tendency, but to an attack of bile or jaundice; *very* closely cropped hair in a man bred, until the latest fashion set in, an uncharitable suspicion in the beholder that the individual had come out of gaol, not that he was sober, honest, and religious; we have no longer any means of distinguishing by the cut of a man's clothes whether he is a positivist or a metaphysician. This uniformity of appearance and outward behaviour has, however, its drawbacks. Accustomed as we are to see our fellow-creatures turn out like so many coins all stamped by one mint, to see them behave like so many automata pulled by one and the same string, we are apt to judge too hastily when the exception presents itself; because, as a rule, we have neither inclination nor time to inquire more closely. Even Swift's contemporaries, men of learning as they were, were not free from this reproach; they, for

some time stigmatized him as the *mad parson*, and posterity has, with regard to the most interesting episode in his private life, not as yet made up its mind whether to endorse this epithet, or whether to sift deeper into the cause, despite the fact that the great Irishman's other acts proved conclusively that if demented there was considerable method in his madness.

This most interesting episode in Swift's private life is, from our point of view, we need hardly say, his love affairs, anent which all his biographers have given their opinions, without, as far as we are aware, throwing much light upon the mystery wherein they are involved, contenting themselves to refute accusations too vile and baseless to require refuting.

We confess to a kindness for Swift. We are not blind to his faults, but to our thinking they are amply redeemed by two valuable traits in his character—namely, the courage he had of his opinions, and the unswerving honesty with which he clung to them. In those characteristics we may perhaps find the clue to the hitherto apparent cruelty with which Swift dealt with the affections of two such lovable women as Esther Johnson, otherwise Stella, and Esther Vanhomrigh, *alias* Vanessa.

"It seems rational to hope," says Johnson in his *Life of Savage*, "that minds qualified for

great attainments should first endeavour their own benefit, and that they who are most able to teach others the way to happiness, should with most certainty follow it themselves; but this expectation, however plausible, has been very frequently disappointed." The lexicographer's postulate is susceptible of modification. A great deal depends on the idea such minds, qualified for great attainments have formed of happiness for themselves. They may have pointed out certain roads leading to happiness for the generality of mankind, the same as the shepherd drives his flock to the fold without sharing it himself, knowing well that ovine differs from human bliss. It is an old truism to compare ordinary mankind to the sheep of Panurge, following whither the bell-wether leads, and undoubtedly looking upon the shepherd or the refractory fellow-sheep who would go a way of his own as mad for not sharing their comfortable shelter and fodder. The sheep are incapable of surmising that their brother's body may, on the Pythagorean principle, contain a soul that prefers to think for itself, and brand what is indeed but individuality as madness, the same as mankind condemn everybody who differs from them. The world has done so with Swift. After groping in the dark as to the causes which made the Dean of St. Patrick's reject the happiness of married life,

which made him scorn as it were the tenderness of women, ready to sacrifice everything to his welfare, and not finding the clue, it has, for the sake of despatch, pronounced him mad, or else broached every theory but one—viz., that Swift remained a bachelor *on metaphysical principle*, that circumstances may have imbued him with a strange and profound doctrine, to which he conformed his whole life, that he wished to remain single to set an example, and that when he married, he did so contrary to his convictions. In how far this doctrine was tenable, matters little or nothing to the point under consideration, which simply aims at showing that he may have held such views.

“Life,” it has been said—

“ . . . is a various mother; now she dons
Her plumes and brilliants, climbs the marble stairs
With head aloft, nor ever turns her eyes
On lackeys who attend her; now she dwells
Grim-clad up darksome alleys
And screams in pauper riot.”

To Jonathan Swift she came much in the latter guise. A posthumous child, born under circumstances of the most pressing calamity, educated by the cold and careless charity of relations, denied the usual honours attached to academical study, and spending years of dependence upon the inefficient patronage of Sir William Temple, “a frigid, selfish, and conceited

pedant," the earlier part of his history may be considered as a continued tale of depressed genius and disappointed hopes.* Indian poets represent life as a dream, to Swift its first years at least are a horrid nightmare, which nothing can dispel but the invincible resolution not to go to sleep at all, in other words, not to be betrayed into illusions with regard to the happiness of existence. But this is the resolution of the man, as yet he is a youth, hoping against hope, though already adopting the custom of observing his birthday as a term not of joy, but of sorrow, and of reading, when it annually recurred, the striking passage of Scripture, in which Job laments and execrates the day upon which it was said in his father's house, "that a man-child was born." It is the chuckling preceding the demoniacal laughter we shall hear by-and-by. Still he stretches out his hand for the sorcerer's phial—love. When man enters life, with that excess of confidence or want of courage which, in youth especially, often takes the dual form of inexperience, the most puissant of desires and instincts send him first of all in quest of the happiness of love. There are few, if any, able to evade this law; we are all bound to confess to the redoubt-

* Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Swift*, from which I have borrowed the bare facts contained in this essay.

able truth of the apparently frivolous epigram written by Voltaire underneath the statuette of Cupid:—

“ Qui que tu sois, voici ton maître,
Il l'est, le fut, ou le doit être.”

Above all, when unhappy, does man by a natural instinct turn to woman for consolation. Her sympathy is more soothing than that of his own sex. Plato and all the others notwithstanding, I, the author, would sooner be consoled in my sorrow by a woman ugly as Sycorax than by a man handsome as Adonis. The reason is obvious. The hearty grip of a male friend, his exhortation to cheer up and meet our trouble, presuppose an amount of energy which is the very thing we lack in our moments of despondency. A female caress or kindness, on the contrary, makes no demand upon our cooperation, it lulls us into momentary forgetfulness of our misfortunes. It is the fable of the sun and the wind over again. The one is a stimulant, the other a sedative.

While at Trinity College, Swift made the acquaintance of Jane Waryng, the sister of one of his fellow-students. His passion, like all youthful attachments, seems to have been deep and serious. He pleads vehemently for a return, and offers to forego every worldly interest for her sake. But throughout the correspondence there runs, not

a sportive mood like one in search of happiness, but the tragic tone of the weather-tossed mariner eager to reach a rock whereto to cling, no matter how bleak and bare. The lady, however, was either coy or unwilling. The interchange of letters, fervent, though not with the fervency of a lover on his part, on hers cold and measured, full of that good sense and prudence with regard to worldly affairs, which, however useful, are apt to disgust a lover, because the wounds inflicted on self-love are never so incurable as when the oxide of gold or silver penetrates into them, continue for some time, but gradually there appears a change in the tone of Swift's epistles plainly denoting a corresponding change in his sentiments.

Sooner or later there comes a period in the life of a thinker in which he begins to take himself to task as to his position, with regard not only to his fellow-creatures, but also with regard to the rôle he is to enact in that great mystery-play of Nature. As a rule this period of introspection is caused either by the sorrows and errors of unrequited passion, or else by the plenitude of indulgence, both of which he then discovers are incapable of satisfying a higher mystic craving which he feels within himself. His better nature becomes aware of the truth of Bossuet's sublime saying : " that the intercourse with God alone can satisfy

man," and from this sentiment springs an imperious longing to turn his thoughts heavenwards, to investigate the obscure problem of his destiny face to face with his conscience. He seeks to pierce the clouds behind which is hidden the blind Power who distributes with so unequal a hand the good and the evil, and he asks of Fate the bold and melancholy question, which, according to a great philosopher, "even the merest hind, by the authority of his intellect—qualified and limited as it is supposed to be—has the audacity of propounding to his Creator. 'Why have *You* made me, and what is the part I am to play here below?'" The answer will be interpreted by the questioner according to the traditions by which he was influenced in his youth, in accordance with the bent of his genius, according to the surroundings amidst which he has lived. But unless this answer take entire possession of his soul by plunging it into the depths and joys of mysticism, the questioner will be unable to keep his looks fixed so high for any length of time. *Le soleil ni la mort*, said Rochefoucauld, *ne peuvent se regarder en face*. We may add "nor God." The inquirer will lower his eyes to the earth, and the spectacle of human vicissitudes, hitherto neglected, perhaps from a youthful disdain, will captivate his looks and rivet his attention. Life,

with all its activities, interests, struggles, and heartburnings, will take possession of him. He will pursue the dream of his new ambitions with no less ardour than he pursued the dream of his loves. He simply changes his master, while he thinks to have emancipated himself.

There is no doubt that such a period of reflection came to Swift about this time. Having left the University under particularly unfavourable circumstances, thrown upon the bounty of a patron who excluded him as much as possible from his own society and that of his family, he was perforce, perhaps from inclination also, compelled to fall back upon his studies, which for eight years he unremittingly pursued for eight hours a day. We may easily imagine the answer that came back to him on the question what part he was to play here below; there is no difficulty in surmising through what prism it was vouchsafed to him to see the follies and struggles of this world. He had tasted none of the joys, but already many of the evils, of life, and fancy hears him exclaim, a hundred years before Heine is born—

“ Das Glück ist eine leichte Dirne
Und weilt nicht gern am selben Ort;
Sie streicht das Haar dir von der Stirne
Und Küsst dich rasch, und flattert forth,

“ Frau Unglück hat im Gegentheile
Dich liebefest an's Herz gedrückt ;
Sie sagt, sie habe keine Eile,
Setzt sich zu dir an's Bett und strickt.”

What more natural to such a mind under such circumstances than the conclusion that suffering of every degree, from the grief that kills to the ennui that silently saps, is the absolute law of this sublunary planet, that the universe, through the voice of every sentient being, emits a cry of pain or a sigh of ennui, that it “were better not to be.” But at this point either reason or mysticism must intervene. The latter says, Life is the necessary though disagreeable preface to eternity, and a preface which you cannot skip; the former, Life is the first volume, complete in itself, of a work which the Author may expand at his pleasure. He may give us the continuation, but we know not that he will. This first volume contains many startling problems, only soluble by faith; if you have that faith by which to read it, the tome becomes sublime, if not, it becomes absurd. Still the mind goes on. I may have this faith, but others may not, consequently it behoves me not to put this book into the hands of those who may trust implicitly in my judgment, and may with myself find themselves unutterably disappointed. Or else it reasons thus: Life is a lie, a gigantic fiasco, a

series of dramas like those of Gozzi, in which the plots and incidents vary and change in each piece, and are never reproduced again, though the spirit of those incidents is invariable, the catastrophe foreseen, the actors ever the same. Behold in spite of all corrections and improvements Pantaloon as heavy and avaricious as ever, Clown always at his tricks and scoundrelism, Harlequin fair and pleasant to look on, but a coward at heart, who strikes from behind and then hides himself, Columbine frail, inconstant, and coquette, as she was from the beginning. The non-critical spectator, the pit and gallery, are there with their ready applause, because they take no dramatic notes, they forget what they have seen before; but I, with my more profound acumen, must not recommend it to my friends, though as a well-behaved person I am bound to sit out the performance, and not to interrupt by unseemly demonstration of disapproval.

This, if we understand Swift, is the conclusion he has come to, this the language he held to himself. Life is a mistake, but I am here and must make the best of a bad bargain, only I must not be instrumental in bringing other people here; in other words, I must not marry. If many follow my example the world will die out, meanwhile, let me assist to the best of my

abilities my fellow-sufferers. I know my own worth, and I know my own genius.

“Je sais ce que je vauz et crois ce qu'on m'en dit.”

I have weighed my duties towards the world in the balance with the natural gifts I am conscious of possessing, and arrived at the conclusion that a man gifted with genius, by merely working, sacrifices himself for all mankind; therefore he is free from the obligation of sacrificing himself in particular to individuals. On this account he may ignore many claims which others are bound to fulfil. He still suffers and achieves more than all the rest.*

The doctrine savours strongly of Buddhism. Such thoughts are bred by despair, they are the results of the teachings of Kapila. We fancy that we hear the dialogue which Sakya-Mouni holds with himself in the solemn stillness of the night beneath the dense foliage of the fig-tree of Gaja.

“What is the cause of old age, death, pain?”

“The cause is birth.”

“What is the cause of birth?”

“Existence.”

“What is the cause of existence?”

“The attachment of one being to another.”

* Arthur Schopenhauer, quoted in his *Life and Philosophy*, by Helen Zimmern.

“ And the cause of this attachment ?”

“ Desire.”

“ The cause of this desire ?”*

We need go no further. Swift's mind is made up there and then. Desire shall be combated by asceticism, virtually he shall remain a bachelor all his life. This is the index to the views with which henceforth he frequents female society, but female society knows nothing of these views. We have acted upon a lately evolved, though very ancient dramatic theory, we have let the spectator into the secret upon which our comedy hinges, but the actors are as yet, and in this instance—contrary to the rule of theatrical art—may remain, ignorant of the secret. The play may finish with a catastrophe unexplained, the curtain may drop with, as in the ancient tragedies, an invocation to Destiny to solve the riddle to which the *dramatis personæ* have found no clue.

The immediate effect of this resolution on Swift's part shows itself in a letter to Jane Waryng. Though his prospects in a worldly sense have materially improved, it is, as Sir Walter Scott remarks, “ written in a very different tone from the first. Four years had now elapsed, an interval in which much may have

* E. Burnouf, *Introduction à l'Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien.*

happened to abate the original warmth of Swift's passion; nor is it perhaps very fair, ignorant as we are of what occurred in the interim, to pass a severe sentence upon his conduct." The great Scotch novelist has not the least suspicion of what has happened. He does not think for a moment of attributing Swift's change of mind to aught but mortification at Jane Waryng's cruelty for so long a period. He ascribes Swift's coolness as the result of the lady's obstinate refusal to link her fate with one whose pecuniary position is precarious. He is of opinion that this has produced an aversion in the lover's mind, and inclined to endorse the axiom formulated by Rousseau, *L'homme va de l'aversion à l'amour; mais quand il arrive à l'aversion, il ne revient jamais à l'amour.* In proportion, however, to Swift's growing coolness, the lady's affection increased; "she became pressing and categorical in her inquiries what had altered the style of her admirer's letters." Her late admirer found himself on the horns of a dilemma. It may no doubt appear easy to the male looker-on to refuse an offer of marriage; but in our existing state of civilisation, Society has put her veto upon such a step by erecting a conventional barrier, which confines the privileges of each sex within its own domain, and which barrier, despite its merely imaginary existence, is none

the less difficult to transgress. Society has said, I will give each sex a privilege, but one only. The man shall have that of offering, the woman of refusing, matrimony, but on no account shall these conditions be reversed or combined; they must be kept separate. He or she that acts contrary to my dictates shall be visited with my utmost displeasure; for the transgression of the one entails that of the other. Under such circumstances, what is a man to do when a woman says or intimates that she wishes to marry him. He is bound to have recourse to subterfuge; it is woman who makes him dishonest. We cannot blame Swift, therefore, when from necessity he has recourse to prevarication, when he charges Jane Waryng with want of affection and indifference, avers that his income is insufficient; when he retracts his former opinion as to the effects of a happy union. Lastly, when all these delicate hints to be freed from his engagement prove unavailing, he assumes a peremptory and tyrannical tone; he paints his own character in the most odious colours; he assumes vices which he is far from possessing. It is entirely the woman's fault. She, in common with all her sisters, will or cannot see that they would be happier, less apt to be deceived, if they could renounce their common maxim of preferring a man whom they

love to a man who loves them. Swift did not absolutely refuse to wed Jane Waryng, but his conditions were so offensive to female dignity, that a woman who could have accepted them must have been debased indeed. His tone throughout his letters is tyrannical to a degree. He demands to know, "whether she could undertake to manage their domestic affairs, with an income of rather less than three hundred pounds a year; whether she would engage to follow the methods he should point out for the improvement of her mind; whether she could bend all her affections to the same direction which he should give his own, and so govern her passions, however justly provoked, as at all times to resume her good humour at his approach; and finally, whether she could account the place where he resided more welcome than courts and cities without him?" Jane Waryng took the only course open to her, consistent with womanly dignity and pride. She released Swift from his engagement. This is no doubt what he had speculated upon, and, despite the censure of many biographers, we think that his conduct, however offensive it may have been to the lady, was not without excuse. The usages of society debarred him from using the honest plea, "I do not wish to marry you." This frank avowal would, according to them, have been unbecoming a gentleman. If he descended

to cynicism, to falsehood, to blacken his own character, society is to blame, not he. She has so long tolerated the devil's brood with its hypocrisy that apes virtue, that God in self-defence has been obliged to come to the rescue with the cynicism that apes vice. Thus parted Swift and Jane Waryng. But our hero was fated to run the gauntlet of the world's false opinion, in spite of himself, of being accused where he was innocent. Willingly would he have banished love for ever ; but Shakspeare says truly—

“ Love like a shadow flies when substance love pursues,
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.”

“ Qui suit amour, amour le fuit,
Qui fuit amour, amour le suit”

remarks the French proverb more tersely. For even before Jane Waryng was dismissed from the scene, Swift had become acquainted with one of the women whose fate was henceforth to be inseparably linked with his.

During Swift's residence at Sir William Temple's, he became acquainted with Esther Johnson, immortalized to posterity under the poetical name of Stella. She, with her sister and mother, were inmates of Moorpark for several years, and was educated there. Half-ward, half-dependent, considerable interest was taken in her by Sir William, and no doubt to please his patron, and perhaps also from a brotherly friendship for a

lovely and amiable girl, Swift willingly undertook Esther's mental training. This willingness of the young clergyman—Swift by this time had entered into holy orders—has been construed by nearly all his biographers into an attempt to win the affections of his pupil, an attempt, if we are to believe them, as deliberate as that of Abailard to win Héloïse's heart by means of frequent and secluded intercourse, in order to assist her in her studies. They hint, if they do not say, that Swift, then about twenty-six or seven, was in love with a child barely thirteen years old ; for Esther could have been no more, seeing that she was between seventeen and eighteen when she joined her former teacher in Ireland, full five years after the acquaintance had commenced. Some go further still, and insinuate that Swift's nascent love for Stella—as for the future we will call her—was the cause of his desire to break off the engagement with Jane Waryng. We doubt this. Swift may have been another Molière, endeavouring to train another Armande Béjard into a future wife, but as for any evidence as to such intention, it does not exist. The feeling that Stella's companionship could brighten many a dark hour in his life, may have insensibly grown upon him during the constant and habitual interchange of affectionate confidence between himself and pupil ; but that he contemplated

matrimony, or even desired to be more than a faithful and tender friend then or afterwards, we resolutely deny. He had formed a theory, rightly or wrongly, that life was a mistake, that the sooner it came to an end the better, and that he would not be instrumental in prolonging it by contributing to a future generation. This, however, did not prevent him from seizing the rare chances of happiness it might afford, and the affectionate communion with a bright, unsophisticated girl seemed to him one of these chances. That his conduct was selfish we fully admit. His experience should have foreseen the probability of a tenderer feeling than what he aimed at springing up in Stella's heart. His experience failed to perceive this. We must charitably remember that Swift's opportunities of mixing with and observing female society up till now had been very restricted. Even his way of looking at the darker side of life, was caused by the absence of woman's softening influence. Hitherto he had mostly dealt with men, with college wise-acres, haughty patrons, and so forth; the brighter side of existence was entirely unknown to him; and few men derive their knowledge of it from books, least of all from such books as Swift is likely to have perused. Philosophers of all shades treat life at best as a *pis-aller*; as for the poets, such a positivist as Swift

must have taken their rhapsodies for the wish of a happier lot here on earth, not for the reality of such. Nevertheless, our plea does not altogether absolve him. Before long he must have been aware of the real nature of Stella's feelings, and it would have been generous and manly to separate there and then. Fate, however, intervened. Sir William Temple died (1699), leaving Stella, to whom he bequeathed a legacy of a thousand pounds, as it were, under the guardianship of his former secretary. Under ordinary circumstances the latter might have declined this trust; but the relations between him and his patron had changed in Sir William's last years. A feeling of profound friendship and mutual appreciation had sprung up between them, which made it, to say the least, difficult on Swift's part not to comply with Sir William's express wishes, and thus it happened that the tie between Stella and her tutor was involuntarily drawn closer.

In addition to a pecuniary legacy, Sir William rewarded his secretary's generous and disinterested friendship with what he, Sir William, doubtless regarded as of much greater consequence, the bequest of his literary remains. "These," remarks Sir Walter Scott, "considering the author's high reputation and numerous friends, held forth to his literary executor an opportunity of coming before the public in a

manner that should excite at once interest and respect."

For, by this time, Swift had already resolved to make himself eminent as an author, probably for a twofold reason; first, because his ambition itself pointed that way, secondly, because he thought it the shortest way to preferment in the church. King William had promised his late confidential adviser to bestow on his young protégé a prebend of Canterbury or Westminster. This promise was never fulfilled, notwithstanding the reminder of it to his Majesty, accompanying the edition of Temple's works which were dedicated to the King. Swift waited in vain, fully realising the disappointment so eloquently expressed by Spenser in his *Mother Hubbard's Tale*—

" Full little knowest thou that hast not tride,
What hell it is in suing long to bide;
To loose good dayes that might be better spent,
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow,
To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow;
.
To fret thy soule with crosses, and with cares,
To eate thy heart through comfortlesse despair;
To fawne, to crowche, to waite, to ride, to ronne,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undonne."

This was scarcely calculated to soften Swift's feelings towards the world. He was, like many philosophers, disinclined to counterbalance his

experience by that of others ; in this instance he acted much like the traveller who traverses a foreign town, and who, careless about the interests that move the inhabitants, takes it upon himself to describe its plan and character ; like the painter who, in the country, observes not the various inter-connected phenomena, such as corn-land, grazing meadows, vineyards, but a sombre or smiling, a grandiose, or pretty, landscape. After all, life is like a foreign language which it is given to the philosopher to decipher, if he happen to hit upon the right key, if he succeed in applying to it an alphabetical system that forms syllables, words, phrases ; and when these words have a constant, not a merely temporal acceptation ; when these phrases present a continuous and satisfactory sense, then, and then only he may flatter himself to have met with the truth. Swift never found this key. He had entered the world by a back door as it were, seen the state apartments of the grand edifice by stealth, and when there was a prospect of raising himself to a sufficiently high social level to live in them, been flung back into the servants' hall : it was no wonder that he misinterpreted, and continued to misinterpret, the sublime language of life. To this may be ascribed the contempt so abundantly flung at civilisation and its works, this theory of suffering so plainly

discernible in his writings, this absence of all illusion, this too naked exposition of the truth.

After many months of weary waiting for the King's favour, Swift, sufficiently well known among the friends of his late patron to have his talents appreciated by them, accepted the post of chaplain and private secretary to Lord Berkeley, one of the Lords Justices of Ireland. This dual office he did not hold long. The intriguing of a certain Mr. Bushe, who had designs upon the latter office for himself, displaced him, Lord Berkeley justifying his ungenerous conduct by the plea that the duties attached to the secretaryship were incompatible with the character of a clergyman, but promising at the same time to make amends by providing Swift with the first good church living that should become vacant. Much reason as he had to feel hurt, the chaplain remained in his single capacity, but when the rich deanery of Derry was at his lordship's disposal, and he refused it to Swift, unless the latter would pay down a sum of a thousand pounds, his anger found vent in some personal abuse, and two or three keen personal satires, which plainly showed that it was dangerous to trifle with him. Lord Berkeley thought it more politic to pacify him by the presentation of the rectory of Agher, and the vicarships of Laracor and Rathbeggan. In a short time the preben-

dary of Dunlavin was added, and Swift found himself in possession of an income of about 400*l.* a year. There was now no obstacle, if he had felt disposed, to his marrying Jane Waryng, with whom he was still in correspondence—for we have somewhat anticipated the termination of this connexion in the preceding pages. But as we have already stated, he showed himself but too anxious to escape from the engagement. All his biographers, without exception, have ascribed this desertion of one woman to the growing attachment for another. We would willingly assent to this weight of opinion entitled to much respect, but for one obstacle. If Swift was really in love with his former pupil, why did not he marry her? Nothing prevented him. His existence was assured, the young lady herself was not absolutely penniless. Yet what do we find? No sooner is the new vicar installed at Laracor than he takes steps to send for his ward, but instead of making her his wife, he establishes her at a mile's distance from his domicile, and in order to give the world no cause for scandal provides her with a chaperone in the person of Mrs. Dingley. And the reason of this apparently inconsistent behaviour? The answers, in this instance, are not so uniform as the cause advanced for Swift's rupture with Jane Waryng. Sir Walter Scott attributes it to pru-

dential motives. We transcribe literally from his *Life of Swift*. After commenting upon the precautions taken to instruct the world of the nature of the attachment to Stella, "by every exterior circumstance which could distinguish a union of mere friendship from one of a more tender nature," the biographer continues; "It is, however, highly probable that between Swift and Stella there was a tacit understanding that their union was to be completed by marriage when Swift's income, according to the prudential scheme which he had unhappily adopted, should be adequate to the expense of a matrimonial establishment." Then follows the comment upon the, to us, altogether unfounded motives with which Sir Walter has credited Swift. "And here it is impossible to avoid remarking the vanity of that over-prudence, which labours to provide against all possible contingencies. Had Swift, like any ordinary man in his situation, been contented to share *his limited income*—the italics are ours—with a deserving object of his affections, the task of his biographers would have been short and cheerful; and we should neither have had to record, nor apologise for, those circumstances which form the most plausible charge against his memory. In the pride of talent and wisdom, he endeavoured to frame a new path to happiness; and

the consequences have rendered him a warning where the various virtues with which he was endowed, ought to have made him a pattern."

Surely Sir Walter's good sense and clear-headed arguing must have deserted him for the nonce when he penned those lines. Could Swift who, as he himself proves, was economy personified, have had any doubt as to the prudence of living on an income of between four hundred and four hundred and fifty pounds—Stella was possessed of a thousand pounds, and interest was high in Ireland in those days. Was that sum a limited income at that period, and especially in Ireland? We leave the reader to form his own judgment.

Now let us turn to another biographer. After also attributing Swift's broken engagement with Jane Waryng to his love for Stella, he contradicts himself in his next sentence when accounting for her anomalous position at Trim. "Of the softer and romantic qualities of the heart, which open the avenues of love, Swift was entirely devoid, his mind was bent on higher objects and interested in busier and more ambitious scenes." Yet in another moment he destroys this theory also. "I have no doubt but that he regarded the blooming and beautiful Stella with the most sincere friendship, and with something more than brotherly affection." This is the Reverend John Mitford who speaks, and if the good clergyman were still

alive and had not expressly told us of having no experience in love himself and of being ignorant of the feelings and sensibilities of the female heart,* we should have applied to him to reconcile the two statements of an absence of "the softer and more romantic qualities of the heart, which open the avenues of love," and "a more than brotherly fondness and affection."

Yet a third biographer†—we must not weary the reader with any more—has accounted for Swift's doings in love as well as other affairs by the ingenious and cheap expedient of declaring roundly that, "from the beginning to the end of his days, Jonathan Swift was more or less MAD." All we can say to this last declaration is, that if Swift at this period of his life was mad, we wish that he had bequeathed us half of his complaint. It would have made our fortune. If anything, Swift was too sane, perhaps, and though this may approach to madness, it is certainly not the sort of insanity to which the *Times* writer alluded.

Did it ever strike these and other biographers that Swift may have held to himself some such argument as this? "This world is a bad place to be in, *misera conditio nostra*, but it could not long

* *The Poetical Works of Jonathan Swift*, preceded by *The Life of Swift*, by the Rev. John Mitford. The Aldine Edition of the British Poets. Bell and Daldy. Vol. i. p. xxvii.

† *Amours of Dean Swift*, "The Times," Oct. 3, 1850.

continue to exist without love. Hence love is the enemy. Make it a luxury or a pastime if you will, treat it as an artist, the 'Genius of the Species' is a worker with but one aim, to produce. He has but one thought, positive and devoid of all poetry, the duration of mankind. Man is actuated neither by depraved desire nor by divine attraction, but works for the 'Genius of the Species' without knowing it; he is at once his courtier, his instrument, and his dupe. Admire if you will the ingenious process of the Genius, but do not forget that he thinks of nothing else but to fill up the voids, to repair the breaches, to maintain the balance between supply and demand, to keep largely populated the stable, which we call the world, and whither come Suffering and Death to recruit their victims. It is for this, it is with a view to the species, that previous to approaching the wheels of the machine, this cunning and treacherous Genius, who does not want to fail in his work, observes so closely, so carefully, the properties, the combinations, the reactions, the sympathies and antipathies of these wheels. Woman is his accomplice. She, aided by Christianity, chivalry, and poetry, accomplished a marvellous thing when between them they spiritualised love. Perhaps there would have been an end to love and the human race altogether; men weary of suffering and seeing no means of

escape for themselves or for their children from the misery and wretchedness that crush them, and to which they grow more sensible in proportion to growing more civilised, were perhaps on the way to salvation by renouncing love. Woman stepped in. She made an appeal to men's intellect, she brought into play all that was most spiritual in the feminine organisation, and consecrated it to the trifling and play they call love. Innocent dupes, gallant coxcombs that you are, who believe that by cultivating woman's mind, you can raise her to your level, how is it that you have not perceived as yet that these queens of your society have wit sometimes, genius by accident, but intellect never, or that what little intelligence they have is to the intellect of men what the sunflower is to the sun, the king of light. Since you have admitted them into your deliberations, they have made of you a race of Chrysaldes, who, under woman's yoke, have forgotten the few virtues they ever possessed. Woman has been the instrument of inoculating the modern world with the disease that gnaws at it like a cancer. Too weak in body and mind to maintain by discussion the position she has usurped, too feeble physically to execute the projects engendered by a tyrannical mind, she must nevertheless have some weapon; the lion has his claws and teeth, the

vulture his beak, the elephant his tusks and trunk, the bull his horns, woman has nothing of all this; the cuttlefish, which to kill or to elude its enemy, spurts its sepia and darkens the water, is the only being in the animal kingdom analogous to her. Like the cuttlefish, she wraps herself in a cloud, and moves unrestrainedly amidst dissimulation. And who, subjugated by her, trained—tamed I should say—in her school, who shall boast of being sincere and independent? If you did, woman would let you boast, but she would smile behind her fan or handkerchief if a fine lady, behind her apron or hand if of the lower classes. No, I will do woman the justice of acknowledging her share in civilisation, but I will also be careful to avoid the trap Nature has spread for me, and remain a bachelor. I profoundly believe in at least that part of Christianity which teaches continence, though her Apostles, any more than the apostles of the other great religions, had no notion what makes of this virtue a sovereign one. They have often seen nothing more in it than the development of an energy without aim, the merit of obeying a fantastical law, of supporting a gratuitous privation, or else they have crowned celibacy as some incomprehensible purity. To me all this is of no account. I advocate celibacy because it leads to salvation; to prepare the end of the

world, to indicate the means of accomplishing this end is the supreme utility of an ascetic existence. By dint of benevolence, of alms, of consolation, the apostle of charity saves from death some families whom by his very benevolence he dooms to a protracted agony, the ascetic does more by his abstinence, he saves the life of entire generations. Vincent de Paul snatches children from the streets and preserves their lives, the Indian law that immolates the female child is greater than he, she kills half of the mischief in this world. Yes, the ascetic is right; he gives the example which has nearly saved the world twice or thrice. Woman has pitted herself against him. See whether she shall pit herself against me."

Let the reader remember that this is not ours, but Swift's argument, which we have lent him for the nonce, because we are profoundly convinced that some such thoughts must have been uppermost in his mind. It is the offspring of pessimism, bred from accidental suffering, or a wrong conception of life, such as Schopenhauer, Leopardi, Hartman, and others have professed, and Swift was a pessimist, not a misanthrope, as many have maintained.

It is not very wonderful that a young girl like Stella did not find this out, seeing that so many learned men have hopelessly struggled to

find a motive for Swift's deliberate celibacy. There is a kind of attachment which it is difficult, above all for a woman, to distinguish from love; even such an experienced man of the world as La Bruyère has averred that friendship is impossible between man and woman. This, of course, applies when both or one are still young.

It may well be supposed that Stella, whom all the biographers have described as possessing rare beauty, a natural and ready wit, owing little to education, great powers of grave and gay conversation, and an independent though very moderate fortune, was not long before meeting with an admirer. "She was then about eighteen, her hair of a raven black, her features both beautiful and expressive, and her form of perfect symmetry, though rather inclined to *embonpoint*. The Reverend Dr. William Tisdal, a friend of Swift, made her an offer of marriage. The proposal was addressed to the young lady's guardian, whom she no doubt referred her suitor. It was calculated to throw Swift into a great embarrassment. If he really loved Stella with "more than a brotherly fondness and affection," the time had come for declaring such a passion and for making her his wife, if not he had to resolve upon resigning her to Tisdal. He did neither. At this juncture we are met by the

.

conflicting statements of his various biographers. According to one, Mr. Deane Swift, the vicar of Laracor, insisted upon such unreasonable terms for his ward's maintenance and provision in case of widowhood, that Tisdal was unable to accede to them. On the other hand, if we are to believe Sheridan, the refusal came finally from the young lady herself, "who though she showed at first no repugnance to Tisdal's proposal, perhaps," he insinuates, "with a view to sound Swift's sentiments, yet could not at length prevail upon herself to abandon the hope of being united to him." Both these gentlemen may be substantially correct, the one in his plain statement of facts, the other in his surmises as to the cause of Stella's refusal, but in either case great blame attaches to Swift's conduct. Whether he destroyed Stella's future by a mean subterfuge, or by feeding her illusion by hopes which he knew were never to be realised, he must be held equally guilty. For though we have attempted to explain Swift's deliberate intention to remain a bachelor—the reader will be pleased to recollect that we have not endeavoured to defend it—we cannot for one moment maintain that he was justified in compelling others to adopt a similar mode of life, nor do we imagine that he openly tried to influence Stella's mind that way, for unless we admit that the whole of Swift's life

was one continued piece of falsehood, *de parti-pris*, we, for ourselves, cannot see his motives for dissimulation at this particular period and in this particular episode, and we have a letter from his own hand to Dr. Tisdal in which he distinctly repudiates the accusation made against him by that gentleman of having wished to frustrate his union with Stella. We give the epistle, dated 20th of April, 1704, almost *in extenso*.

“ I might with good pretence enough talk starchy, and affect ignorance of what you would be at; but my conjecture is, that you think I obstructed your inclinations to please my own, and that my intentions were the same with yours. In answer to all which, I will, upon my conscience and honour, tell you the naked truth. First, I think I have said to you before, that if my fortunes and humour served me to think of that state (the matrimonial), I should certainly, among all persons on earth, make your choice; because I never saw that person whose conversation I entirely valued but hers, this was the utmost I ever gave way to. And secondly, I must assure you sincerely that this regard of mine never once entered into my head to be an impediment to you, but I judged it would perhaps be a clog to your rising in the world; and I did not conceive you were then rich enough to make yourself and her happy and easy. But that objection is now quite removed by what you have at present; overtures to the mother without the daughter's giving, and by the assurances of Eaton's livings. I told you, indeed, that your authority was not sufficient to make me leave her under her own or her friend's hand, which, I think, was a right and prudent step; however, I told the mother immediately, and spoke with all the advantages you deserve. But the object of your fortune being removed, I declare I have no other; nor shall any consideration of my own misfortune, in losing so good a friend and companion as her, prevail on me, against her interest and settlement in the world, since it is held so necessary and convenient a thing for ladies to marry; and that time takes off from the lustre of virgins in all other eyes but mine,” &c.

In this letter Swift distinctly writes : 1st, that if his fortunes and humour served him to think of that state, he would choose Stella above all others. 2nd, that his friendship and a delight in the charm of her conversation was the only feeling he ever gave way to. 3rd, that this regard of his never once entered his head to be an impediment to Tisdal. 4th, that he did not think Tisdal sufficiently rich to make himself and Stella happy and easy. His fortunes and his humour are, if not the same thing, at least closely connected with each other. We will endeavour to show why. We have been too much in the habit to consider philosophical systems in and by themselves, without taking sufficient count of the circumstances under which they were elaborated, of the particular genius who has produced or professed them, to treat them as the algebraical development, as it were, of a certain number of general principles. But it is not like this that a certain philosophical idea or set of ideas or entire system is formed in the mind; philosophy is not an impersonal science from which we can separate the name of the inventor; it is composed of great creations, answering to each other, interlinked, and each of which is the expression and outcome of a genius and a soul co-ordinating their ideas under the complex influence of temperament, education,

and experience. One and the same system or theory may contract two different aspects in its application, according to the two temperaments of the two persons that apply. It was even so with Swift's pessimism, which was born, perhaps, from personal experience of life's misery, rather than the fruit of a deeply laid philosophical theory. He was convinced that the world was a "vale of tears" and suffering, but he also suspected that much of this suffering might be alleviated by wealth, hence, without being in the least degree a miser, he may have come to the conclusion, that if his fortunes would in so far improve as to be in all probability above the ordinary vicissitudes, his humour—*i.e.* his obstinacy in not marrying might also change, if by this acquired wealth he might guard his progeny from the miseries he had suffered. We do not say that it was so, for even later, when such a change actually took place, he held to his original determination; but he was of sober age then, and, as we have already once remarked, old age is the hostelry of languor; we merely give our theory for what it is worth. By the light of this, his second defence is sufficiently easy of explanation. That until his position would have assumed such stability, his friendship, and a delight in the charm of Stella's conversation, were the only feelings he ever gave way to, and that this feeling

would never be made an impediment by him to Stella's union with Tisdal. This was not denying his tenderer feelings for Stella, for we believe in the truth of his statement, that "he loved her better than his life, a thousand million times;" it was simply confessing that he would not allow these tenderer feelings to get the better of him, as long as money was his imaginary obstacle to their happiness. Under these circumstances, thinking money the best and only safeguard against the probable sufferings of this world, he would not allow Stella to be exposed to them on an income which may not have been as much, but certainly was not more than what he, Swift, himself could offer.

Again, at the time that this letter was written (1704) Stella was of age, and could, had she felt disposed, have married Mr. Tisdal; nor do we imagine that Swift would have absolutely forbidden her to do so before her majority. It is also certain, if we read Swift's character aright, that he never openly declared his attachment to her. Her knowledge of it must have been entirely derived from that essentially feminine quality, intuition; and being assured of this affection, like a true woman she preferred unwedded misery with the man she loved, to wedded contentment with one for whom she did not feel the same ardent passion. She preferred living in hopes of

being united to Swift one day, and would no doubt have been satisfied, if not altogether happy, in this position of her own choosing, had not a mightier tyrant and destroyer than love stepped in—jealousy.

To such a mind as Swift's the company of woman, however charming, and the quiet happiness of undisturbed obscurity, were not sufficient. He was not content with "the virtue that produces nothing." During his stay at Sir William Temple's he had imbibed a taste for politics, and as absenteeism was not considered incompatible with the performance of the duties of a clergyman in those times, Swift was not long in making his way to London, where he became intimate with the political and literary celebrities of the day. His great talents soon procured him the friendship of the leaders of the Whig party, to which he rendered important services by the audacity of his writings, and the keenness of his satire. During these frequent excursions, Stella and Mrs. Dingley occupied the house at Laracor, while on the return of the vicar they retired to Trim. A most affectionate intercourse was maintained, both when at home and away, but of marriage the "Journal to Stella," as far as we have perused it, does not contain one word. Swift's celebrity soon reached its zenith. Addison, Steele, and Arbuthnot

became his friends, the *Tale of a Tub*, though published anonymously, obtained for its author universal renown, but it effectually prevented his rising to the highest dignity in the Church, the position of which his book aimed at consolidating. Swift's pen was put into requisition for his allies, the Whigs, until 1709, when having assisted Steele in the establishment of the *Tatler*, he returned to Laracor, and to his clerical duties. His influence in the political world had become such, however, that he was not allowed to remain long at home. While waiting for the preferment which he reasonably expected at the hands of those whom he had served so well, a change came over the spirit of the nation, the Whigs had to retire, and were replaced by the Tories. Swift cast his lot with the new ministry, of which proceeding we do not give an opinion, first, because we are not sufficiently acquainted with politics; secondly, because the discussion of such topics does not enter into the scope of this essay. We are content to believe though, from what we know of Swift's character, "that," as Sir Walter Scott observes, "unless addressing those who confound principle with party," it would be easy to show that Swift remained uniformly consistent to the former, even if he changed the latter, that while with the Whigs he in many instances professed opinions which

had up till then been the characteristic sentiments of the Tories. He appears to have been as zealous for those whom he joined as he had been for those whom he had left. The high promotion which he expected in England never came. By his bitter and personal satires upon those placed nearest to the Queen, he had effectually barred against himself the way to advancement in England. He who had generously helped others could not help himself an inch. The sole reward he ever received for his services was his appointment to the Deanery of St. Patrick in the beginning of 1713.

We need enlarge no further upon his political career, which left him a disappointed man, adding to the bitterness of his already haughty temper, aggravated by the ingratitude of his friends, whom, in justice be it said, he never violently accused. Nor was the consolation which he might have derived once from the sweet companionship of Stella open to him in its former unalloyed state. Circumstances, not of Stella's making, nor, we would fain believe, of Swift's seeking, had of late altered their relations, not outwardly, but by a something that was felt rather than seen.

In the society which he frequented during his various stays in London, Swift had met with Esther Vanhomrigh, the eldest daughter of a Dutch merchant who had been commissary of stores for King William during the Irish civil

wars, and afterwards muster-master general and commissioner of the revenues. Her father was dead, and she lived with her mother, two brothers, and a sister. Of her personal charms we know little, but she possessed that which was sure to attract a man like Swift. To a lively and graceful manner was added a taste for reading and mental cultivation greater than fell usually to the lot of a young lady of those days. There is little doubt that these latter attributes brought Swift to Esther Vanhomrigh's side. He felt interested in a young, accomplished girl, offered to direct and superintend her studies, without imagining in the least that the intimacy thus begun would lead to anything more than a sincere friendship. After all, it is very hard that a man may not seek the company of a talented woman without the world accusing him of an *arrière pensée* in so doing. For what was probably an act of pure kindness on Swift's part he has been universally blamed. It should be remembered that he was past forty, and that his pupil was barely twenty; also that he was particularly free from that coxcombry which sees in every woman a mistress for the asking. It has been said that there is an evident desire in the "Journal to Stella," to conceal from the latter the growing familiarity with Esther Vanhomrigh—whom henceforth we will call by

the poetical name he gave her, Vanessa. Did the biographers think that Swift was so ignorant of the world's ways as not to know that Stella would judge of that intimacy the same as every one else? And can he be blamed for not having inflicted unnecessary pain upon her? From this concealment Sir Walter argues that— "There was therefore a consciousness on Swift's part that his attachment to his younger pupil was of a nature which could not be gratifying to her predecessor, although he probably shut his own eyes to the consequences of an intimacy which he wished to conceal from those of Stella." With the first part of that sentence we cordially agree, there probably was "a consciousness on Swift's part that Stella would misinterpret his attachment to Vanessa," for jealousy is so demonstrative a passion that it needs no personal experience to become acquainted with its effects; but that Swift "shut his eyes to the consequences of this intimacy" we deny, because he did not apprehend any consequences. Swift was either an honest man or a scoundrel. If the former, he would not have remained wilfully blind to the consequences of a passion which a girl like Vanessa was at no pains to conceal, if the latter, his subsequent conduct would not have been what it was, for there is no doubt that Vanessa would have

gone to any length with him even if he had refused to marry her, and that if he had wanted to marry her, no scruples such as actuated him would have had much weight. But we will not forestall the course of events. Consequently, not suspecting the hopes fostered by Vanessa, he was not bound to declare his peculiar position with regard to Stella, even if we admit that this peculiar position existed. If he had revealed this position, he would have been in honour bound to marry Stella, and we may take it for granted that if such an idea ever took shape in Swift's mind it had been abandoned long ago. Under these circumstances Vanessa's regard ripened into passionate love, conventionality was discarded by her avowal to Swift of the state of her affections, she following a favourite maxim of her tutor, "of doing that which in itself seems right without respect to the common opinion of the world." We have it on Swift's own authority that he felt ashamed, disappointed, nay, guilty and surprised at the avowal. Would he have written thus if he had "wilfully shut his eyes" to Vanessa's growing passion.

"Cadenus is a subject fit,*
Grown old in politics and wit,

* *Cadenus and Vanessa.* Cadenus (Swift) has been selected by Cupid to thwart the projects of Pallas to make Vanessa insensible to love, in revenge for the deceit practised upon

Caress'd by ministers of state,
 Of half mankind the dread and hate.
 Whate'er vexations love attend,
 She need no rivals apprehend.
 Her sex, with universal voice,
 Must laugh at her capricious choice.
 Cadenus many things had writ,
 Vanessa much esteemed his wit,
 And call'd for his poetic works;
 Meantime the boy in secret lurks,
 And while the book was in her hand,
 The urchin from his private stand
 Took aim, and shot with all his strength
 A dart of such prodigious length,
 It pierced the feeble volume through,
 And deep transfix'd her bosom too.
 Some lines, more moving than the rest,
 Stuck to the point that pierced her breast,
 And, borne directly to the heart,
 With pains unknown increased her smart.
 Vanessa, not in years a score,
 Dreams of a gown of forty-four;
 Imaginary charms can find
 In eyes with reading almost blind;
 Cadenus now no more appears
 Declined in health, advanced in years;
 She fancies music in his tongue,
 Nor farther looks, but thinks him young.
 What mariner is not afraid
 To venture in a ship decay'd?
 What planter will attempt to yoke
 A sapling with a falling oak?
 As years increase she brighter shines,
 Cadenus with each day declines;
 And he must fall a prey to time,
 While she continues in her prime.

the Goddess of Wisdom by Venus at Vanessa's birth, whom she had represented as a boy, in order that the child might be endowed with the learning usually given to men.

Cadenus, common forms apart,
In every scene had kept his heart ;
Had sigh'd and languish'd, vow'd and writ,
For pastime, or to show his wit ;
But books, and time, and State affairs,
Had spoilt his fashionable airs ;
He now could praise, esteem, approve,
But understood not what was love.
His conduct might have made him styled
A father, and the nymph his child.
That innocent delight he took
To see the virgin mind her book,
Was but the master's secret joy
In school to hear the finest boy.
Her knowledge with her fancy grew,
She hourly press'd for something new ;
Ideas came into her mind
So fast, his lessons lagg'd behind ;
She reason'd, without plodding long,
Nor ever gave her judgment wrong.
But now a sudden change was wrought,
She minds no longer what he taught.
Cadenus was amazed to find
Such marks of a distracted mind ;
For, though she seemed to listen more
To all he spoke than e'er before,
He found her thoughts would absent range,
Yet guess'd not whence could spring the change.
And first he modestly conjectures
His pupil might be tired with lectures,
Which help'd to mortify his pride,
Yet gave him not the heart to chide ;
But in a mild, dejected strain,
At last he ventured to complain :
Said she should be no longer teased,
Might have her freedom when she pleased ;
Was now convinced he acted wrong
To hide her from the world so long,
And in dull studies to engage
One of her tender sex and age ;

That every nymph with envy own'd
How she might shine in the *grand monde* ;
And every shepherd was undone
To see her cloister'd like a nun.
This was a visionary scheme,
He waked and found it but a dream ;
A project far above his skill,
For nature must be nature still.
If he were bolder than became
A scholar to a courtly dame,
She might excuse a man of letters,
Thus tutors often treat their betters ;
And since his talk offensive grew,
He came to take his last adieu.

Vanessa, fill'd with just disdain,
Would still her dignity maintain,
Instructed from her early years
To scorn the art of female tears.
Had he employ'd his time so long
To teach her what was right and wrong,
Yet could such notions entertain
That all his lectures were in vain ?
She own'd the wandering of her thoughts,
But he must answer for her faults.
She well remember'd to her cost,
That all his lessons were not lost.
Two maxims she could still produce,
And sad experience taught their use :
That virtue, pleased by being shown,
Knows nothing which it dares not own ;
Can make us without fear disclose
Our inmost secrets to our foes ;
That common forms were not design'd
Directors to a noble mind.
Now, said the nymph, to let you see
My actions with your rules agree ;
That I can vulgar forms despise
And have no secrets to disguise,
I knew, by what you said and writ,
How dangerous were men of wit ;

You caution'd me against their charms,
But never gave me equal arms;
Your lessons found the weakest part,
Aim'd at the head, but reach'd the heart.
Cadenus felt within him rise
Shame, disappointment, guilt, surprise.
He knew not how to reconcile
Such language with her usual style;
And yet her words were so exprest
He could not hope she spoke in jest.
His thoughts had wholly been confined
To form and cultivate her mind.
He hardly knew, till he was told,
Whether the nymph were young or old;
Had met her in a public place
Without distinguishing her face;
Much less could his declining age
Vanessa's earliest thoughts engage;
And if her youth indifference met,
His person must contempt beget;
Or, grant her passion be sincere,
How shall his innocence be clear?
Appearances were all so strong,
The world must think him in the wrong;
Would say he made a treacherous use
Of wit to flatter and seduce."

If we have given this somewhat lengthy extract it is because Swift paints the situation far better than we could have done, and because, allowing for the unavoidable poetic licence, we believe the version to be substantially true. That the position was a trying one, no one with the least amount of imagination—for we sincerely hope that the actuality has never befallen any of our male readers—will be prepared to deny. Whatsoever claims we may advance to

be unfettered by conventionality, we are all more or less its slave. To seriously refuse a woman who offers you the greatest honour she possibly can confer—namely, to make you the arbiter of her future life—requires an amount of courage of which few we fear are possessed. Nor is the refusal made more easy if one have the excuse of a previous engagement, for inconstancy is only blamed in others when we ourselves are its victim; when we happen to be the gainers by it, we are charmed, inasmuch as it tickles our vanity. We should say that this, and not Scott's reason, "that he was conscious that the explanation had been too long delayed," induced Swift to conceal, even at the eleventh hour, his engagement—if there was an engagement—to Stella. He took the only course open to a man of the world under the circumstances. He professed to treat Vanessa's avowal as a joke. What else could he have done? He knew full well by this time that Vanessa was serious, but in order not to humble her pride he pretended to regard the matter as the whim of a young girl. "Neither love nor friendship should receive aught they cannot return," says Perdican, in *On ne badine pas avec l'Amour*; and once more we maintain that Swift was too honest a man to accept Vanessa's love, knowing he could not return it. That the girl herself was dissatisfied is not

surprising. *Il n'est rien d'être admiré, l'affaire est d'être aimé*; short of love there was henceforth no peace for her.

With these fresh troubles, added to his ungratified ambition with regard to preferment in England, Swift returned to Ireland and to Stella, the latter conscious of a change of tone in her guardian's correspondence, and suspecting its cause, if we are to believe that the feelings of jealousy and displeasure which Swift ventured to appease were produced by Stella's knowledge of having a rival in his affections. Again we must be permitted to doubt that the coolness visible in the altered tone of the "Journal to Stella" was produced by Swift's affection for Vanessa. No one, if we have read his character aright, up till this time, would have been more careful to betray signs of a waning affection, which he knew must cause pain, unless this were done with the deliberate purpose of paving the way for a rupture that might leave him free to marry Vanessa, and that such a thought never entered Swift's head will be sufficiently evident by-and-by. Would it not be more just to suppose that the worry of politics, the anxiety about his personal affairs, left him neither time nor inclination to indulge in those soft endearments which Stella had been accustomed to regard as a *sine quâ non* of their correspondence. Nay, if

the old proverb be true, "that a burnt child dreads the fire," may we not suppose that Swift grew chary at this time of using these soft expressions, which in all probability had worked such dire mischief in his intercourse with Vanessa. Under the influence of strong excitement man is apt to forget his logic, and though we think it inconsistent that Swift should have withheld his "little language" from Stella just when the absence of it might arouse suspicion, we must remember that we are the lookers-on, not the actors in the play. That Stella grew jealous was in the nature of things, nor can we withhold our sympathy with this feeling from which she prays the gods to guard her.

"O shield me from his rage, celestial Powers!
This tyrant that embitters all my hours.
Ah, Love! you've poorly played the hero's part;
You conquer'd, but you can't defend my heart.
When first I bent beneath your gentle reign,
I thought this monster banished from your train;
But you would raise him to support your throne,
And now he claims your empire as his own;
Or tell me, tyrants, have you both agreed
That where one reigns the other shall succeed?"*

Despite this feeling, perhaps because of it, Stella consented to take up her abode in Dublin

* Sir Walter Scott is of opinion that in these, as well as other verses, Stella received assistance from one of Swift's literary friends—"Dr. Delany probably," he says.

as soon as Swift was settled in the deanery-house. The intercourse was continued with the same circumspection that had saved it from scandal at Laracor. All this tends but to confirm the opinion we have expressed, that Swift did intend neither to marry Vanessa nor Stella. At any rate it would have been easy for him to keep the latter, if not the former, at a distance.

With Vanessa his position was extremely awkward. She had the decided advantage over her rival, not, as Scott remarks, "in being the more important victim from her social position," but as he afterwards corrects himself, of "having in a manner compelled Swift to hear and reply to the language of passion. There was in her case no Mrs. Dingley, no convenient third party, whose presence in society and community in correspondence necessarily imposed upon both restraint, convenient perhaps to Swift, but highly unfavourable to Stella." It is very evident, however, that he meant to confine his connexion with both within the limits of the platonic. The circumstances that compelled him to give that connexion with Stella a different character were such as no man could have combated.

Mrs. Vanhomrigh, Vanessa's mother, and her two sons, had died within a short period of each other, leaving the survivors, Vanessa and her younger sister, sufficiently embarrassed in money

affairs to afford the former a plausible excuse for retiring to Ireland, where their father had left a small property near Celbridge. Their arrival in Dublin increased the jealousy of Stella, and consequently augmented the embarrassment of Swift, leading him to reiterated remonstrances, and when these were of no avail, to downright unkindness in his reproaches. The intimacy which had passed without comment in London would naturally evoke gossip in Dublin, and this the new Dean was determined to prevent.

But in those kind of intimacies the proverb is reversed, *Ce n'est pas le premier pas qui coûte*, but *le dernier*. Vanessa would not take "no" for an answer, and an *escalandre* had to be avoided at all risks, for it was obvious that any decisive measure would be attended with some such tragic consequence, as that which, though late, at length concluded their story. Swift found himself in a situation somewhat similar to that of the celebrated Captain Macheath, with this difference, that it would have made him happy to have both charmers away instead of one. He willingly offered friendship to both, but *les femmes cependant demandent autre chose*, observes a character in one of Alfred de Musset's plays. Meanwhile Swift continued to visit Vanessa, hoping that time would cure her infatuation, cheering her with lively and witty con-

versation, treating the matter lightly, though well aware of the sufferings he had involuntarily inflicted upon the young girl. However much his biographers have accused him of want of heart, to us the heart peeps out every now and then from behind his bitter satire, we hear his dumb cries of anguish amidst the strident laughter, we do not doubt that he knew himself guilty and innocent at the same time, though in truth he was as much sinned against as sinning. The world may call him perjurer, executioner; we call him victim. To us it matters not that those who suffered at his hands were women, that they suffered as much as he did; we look at the fact that he had never breathed a word of love to either of them, and that their martyrdom arose from misapprehension of his character, for which they, not he, was to blame. We have never been able to see why woman should reap the benefit and man the blame of her mistakes. It is not God's law. Adam and Eve were equally driven out of Paradise.

In Vanessa's case it was not only Swift who suffered, but Stella also, who, in this instance, was far more excusable in her error with regard to the nature of her former tutor's affections. For the attentions exacted by Vanessa, provoked in Stella a jealousy neither unreasonable nor dishonourable, which secretly preying upon her

mind, undermined still further her health, already on the decline. She had sacrificed to a hope, delusive perhaps, but from her standpoint not altogether unfounded, all but her virtue and honour, the best part of her life had faded away amidst unfulfilled expectations; nay, while she had the satisfaction of knowing that her conduct had remained irreproachable, this satisfaction was embittered by the consciousness that in the eyes of the world she had jeopardised her reputation. Though not absolutely holding aloof from her—very few persons of rank visited her—at least very few ladies. There is no severer judge of woman than woman herself. The rapidity of her self-promotion to the judicial bench is truly marvellous. Nor is it surprising. She has instituted a court of law in which the advocate, if such can be found amongst her own sex, is classed with the criminal as an abettor; and besides, the judicial functions are so easy to fulfil, the jury are generally so unanimous, for they know that a divergence of opinion would ruin once for all their prospect of a place on the judgment-seat, for which all are fit, because there is no need of weighing evidence, of determining the degree of guilt, of adjudicating the amount of punishment. Every offence is a capital one, punishable with *civil death* as the French have it, consequently every jury-woman

is a hanging-judge in prospective. Stella had been arraigned, the verdict, exceptionally mild this time, a Scotch one, "Not Proven," which, as every one knows, is as damning in its effects as the severer "Guilty." Swift felt deeply and bitterly the slights to which his conduct had exposed her. Stella's melancholy increased daily. He employed the Bishop of Clogher, his tutor and early friend, to inquire the cause, and received the very answer he could have anticipated. Her sensibility to his recent indifference, and to the discredit which her character had sustained from the dubious and mysterious connexion between them. "To convince her of the constancy of his affection, and to remove her beyond the reach of calumny, there was but one remedy.* To this Swift replied that he had formed two resolutions with regard to matrimony. One, that he would not marry till possessed of a competent fortune; the other, that the event should take place at a time of life which gave him a reasonable prospect to see his children settled in the world. The independence he proposed he had not yet achieved, and, on the other hand, he was past that time of life which

* Rev. John Mitford, *Life of Swift*, from which, subject to our own deductions, are borrowed the following extracts, relating to Swift's *supposed* marriage, and subsequent events, ending with the deaths of Vanessa and Stella.

gave him a reasonable prospect to see his children settled in the world. It may be observed that Swift undoubtedly had a right to lay down these or any other rules for the regulation of his own conduct, and the supposed safeguard of his own happiness; but these very rules obliged him to act with great circumspection and caution in his intercourse with females, and not to keep his maxims of prudence in reserve while he was engaging the affections of the artless and the inexperienced by a tenderness and gallantry that were the forerunners, according to their ideas, of more intimate and lasting connexions. Swift, however, made one concession, the least that could be granted, and of itself an imperfect remedy of the evils that he had caused."

The reverend gentleman has summed up the situation carefully, and upon the whole justly. It but proves that Swift still adhered to his original resolution, though he pretended to modify it. The excuse of an incompetent fortune, the plea that the time of life was past in which he could reasonably hope to see his children settled in the world, are but the echoes of the conclusions arrived at in his younger days. We may sum them up once more, and again in words borrowed from the tenets of Buddhism, the source whence flows all theoretical or

practical pessimism. "Existence is the evil. Existence is produced by desire, desire is born from the perception of the illusionary forms of the human being. All this is but the effect of ignorance, hence ignorance is in reality the primary cause of everything that appears to exist. To know this ignorance is at once to be capable of destroying its effects.* Conclusion: Man is born with this ignorance, which is simply the potent deceit of the 'Genius of the Species.' I have fathomed this deceit, and shall virtually not yield to it, though I may contract a nominal marriage."

This nominal marriage is the concession alluded to by Mr. Mitford, "as the least that could be granted," and which he rightly designates as being "of itself an imperfect remedy of all the evils that he (Swift) had caused." For though yielding to the pressure brought to bear upon him, the conditions he imposed were in strict accordance with the principles already enunciated, rendering the union one in name only. Hence there is no need on our part to inquire whether the marriage really took place, or whether it was an invention of some of the biographers. It is sufficient for our purpose to know that Swift and Stella continued to live

* Max Müller, *Essay on the Religions*.

apart. Her consent to these humiliating conditions was no doubt given for two reasons ; first, because the union cleared her reputation in the eyes of the world ; secondly, because it disarmed all further attempts of Vanessa to legitimise her fancied claims on the Dean.

From contemporary accounts it would appear that Swift's state of mind was very unhappy about the time the union is supposed to have taken place. The theories to account for this unhappiness are so various that it would be a difficult matter to sift the truth from the fiction with which they have been mixed. If some had any real foundation, the whole of Swift's former relations with the female sex would become enveloped in such a cloud of mystery, that it would be more charitable not to attempt to rend the veil. To our thinking, however, there is not a particle of evidence to justify these assertions. Nor is the surmise of the Reverend Patrick Delany, that Swift had discovered too near a consanguinity between Stella and himself—that in fact both were illegitimate children of Sir William Temple—worthy of a moment's consideration. All these undoubtedly honest endeavours to find a cause for Swift's gloom and melancholy, appear to us like the act of a man who throws a paving stone at his friend to dislodge the fly that is tickling his nose and

irritating him. In trying to free him from the aspersions that disfigure his memory, but which at the worst would be venial faults, Swift's biographers and friends have launched an innuendo, which, while common decency forbids us to enlarge upon it, would at once disprove their own asseverations that he could have ever sought to seriously engage the affections of any woman. But enough. It is surely more reasonable to attribute his hypochondria to the first symptoms of the madness which a few years afterwards beclouded his sublime intellect, which carried him to the grave a hopeless lunatic, and the appearance of which symptoms might have been accelerated by the trying situation in which he found himself at this period. For, despite his rebuffs, he could not prevail upon Vanessa to abate one iota of her pretensions. In vain did he try to moderate her passion, and even to direct it into another channel by introducing a friend, Dean Winter, as a candidate for her hand. She rejected this as well as other proposals in peremptory terms. Meanwhile the intimacy with Stella continued on the same, if not on a more guarded footing, because, if their nominal union had indeed been legalised, it was under conditions of the strictest secrecy, though there is no doubt that the secret leaked out eventually. She continued his beloved and

have expected Swift to live with his wife when their union was secret of such impossibility safer in his wife's keeping than otherwise. "This much at least is certain," says the biographer, "that if, according to a desire highly approved, desire produce cannot find any one line in Swift estimating his having felt such a passion nor would the sense of decency, gave way before the slightest exercise his wit, have restrained pressing voluptuous as well as carnal. That he has never done so is the confirmation of our own doctrine without absence or suppression in early passion, and his consequent aver *En passant*, be it said, that this was the only thing that he had

“Celui qui ne voit pas, dans l'aurore empourprée,
Flotter les bras ouverts, une ombre idolâtrée;
Celui qui ne sent pas, quand tout est endormi,
Quelque chose qui l'aime errer autour de lui;
Celui qui n'entend pas une voix éplorée
Murmurer dans la source, et l'appeler ami;

“Celui qui n'a pas l'âme à tout jamais aimante,
Qui n'a pas pour tout bien, pour unique bonheur
De venir lentement poser son front rêveur
Sur un front jeune et frais, à la tresse odorante,
Et de sentir ainsi d'une tête charmante
La vie et la beauté descendre dans son cœur;

* * * * *

“Que celui-là rature et barbouille à son aise
Il peut, tant qu'il voudra, rimer à tour de bras,
Ravauder l'oripeau qu'on appelle antithèse,
Et s'en aller ainsi jusqu'au Père-Lachaise,
Trainant à ses talents tous les sots d'ici-bas;
Grand homme si l'on veut; mais poète, non pas.”

To all these softening influences Swift was proof. What he praises most in his celebrated favourites are those attributes most frequently found in the other sex. After the first years of his life woman was only valuable to him when content to forego the most womanly qualities. His temperate predilection is best pleased when it meets with an equally temperate attachment—

“With friendship and esteem possess,
I ne'er admitted love a guest.”

His own lines are the best defence of the accusations against him. He considered his regard for Vanessa as no breach of his faith to Stella, “until taught by the unrestrained declara-

tion of the former, as well as by their mutual rivalry, that the coldness of his own temper had prevented him from estimating the force of passion in those who became his victims."

The rest of the story is soon told. The relations between Swift and the two women never changed. In 1717, despite his entreaties and warnings, Vanessa retired to her property near Celbridge, to nurse in seclusion her hopeless passion. He did the utmost in his power to soothe her grief by a regular and affectionate correspondence, continually advising her to seek society, even exhorting her to leave Ireland altogether. During the next three years they only met when she was occasionally in Dublin, but about 1720 her sister died, and this sad event, which left Vanessa alone in the world, induced Swift to pay her a visit at her country-house, and to repeat it from time to time. The renewed meeting, added to the consciousness of her isolation from the bereavement she had sustained, seemed to have increased the energy of her fatal passion; and ignorant as she still was of the irrevocable tie that bound Swift to Stella, she ventured upon addressing the latter, requesting to know the nature of their connexion. Whether she hoped to bring about a rupture between Swift and her rival, and by those means to force him into a union with herself, we know

not ; certain is it that she succeeded partly in her aim. Stella, in answer, informed her of her marriage ; and incensed against Swift for having given another woman such rights as Vanessa's inquiries implied, she sent him her letter, and immediately retired to a friend's house in the suburbs of Dublin, without seeing her husband or awaiting his reply. Two circumstances, however, frustrated Vanessa's scheme. The tie that bound Swift was indissoluble. Stella's retirement did not provoke pique against herself, but anger against the cause. Swift, in one of those paroxysms of fury that were habitual with him, rode instantly to Marley Abbey, strode into the apartment, flung Vanessa's letter on the table, and, without saying a word, mounted his horse and returned to Dublin. She felt that all hopes were at an end. The chords of the fond but misguided heart had snapped. She survived but a few weeks, and died uncheered by the presence of him to whom her life was sacrificed.

Whatsoever pain the passions may cause, we must not compare the sorrows of life with those of death. Swift, agonised, rushed from the world. For two months subsequent to the death of Vanessa, his place of abode was unknown. The period of self-communion seems to have calmed his mind. Upon his return, Stella was easily persuaded to forgive, judging that his

own anguish was sufficient punishment for what had become irreparable. He again devoted himself industriously to affairs of State, but especially to rescue Ireland from the absolute thralldom in which she was held by England. Single-handed he fought and vanquished the English Government. His popularity in the country, not of his love, but of his birth and adoption, became so great, that it remains unparalleled up to this day, in a land where the indiscriminate worship of the agitator is, unfortunately, part of the national religion; where the "Popular Idol" is more often a Thersites than a Nestor. Swift was justly worshipped, and every hair of his head was sacred to the people who adored him.

In 1726 Swift revisited England, and published anonymously, as was his wont, the famous *Gulliver's Travels*. Its immediate success was but the shrill piping, however loud, of the piccolo, compared with the sonorous and sustained trumpet-blast of admiration which it has evoked ever since. Once more he mingled with the literary world, the subject of homage from the greatest. Yet, courted on all sides, he was doomed again to bitter sorrow. Stella fell ill. Alarmed and full of self-reproach he hastened home, to be received in triumph by the people of Ireland, and to be met with the improved and welcome looks of his convalescent wife. It

was but a brief respite. A twelvemonth after, he was anew summoned from England to find her upon the verge of the grave. He remained at her bedside till the last moment, evincing the tenderest consideration and performing what consolatory tasks he might in the sick-chamber. Shortly before her death, a conversation between the melancholy pair was overheard by Mrs. Whiteway. It related no doubt to the secret of their marriage. Swift is reported to have said, "Well, my dear, if you wish it, it shall be owned." Stella's reply was given in a few words, "*It is too late.*" "On the 28th of January, 1727-28, about eight o'clock at night," writes Sir Walter Scott, "Mrs. Johnson closed her weary pilgrimage, and passed to that land, where they neither marry, nor are given in marriage."

"Et tu mourus aussi . . . l'âme désolée
Mais toujours calme et *bonne*, sans te plaindre du sort,
Tu marchais en chantant dans ta route isolée ;
L'heure dernière vint, tant de fois appelée
Tu la vis arriver, sans crainte et sans remord,
Et tu goutâs enfin, le *charme de la mort.*"

Some years ago, reader, we were at Strasburg, and they showed us the daughter of a former Count de Sarvenden, embalmed and buried in her bridal dress ; the bony finger was still encircled by the wedding ring, the hollow sockets of the skeleton head stared from under the orange blossom, the crumbling dust was still im-

pregnated with a subtle perfume that made one shudder. The Swiss told us the history of the unhappy girl, and he wound up his recital with his own comments. "Her husband left her on her wedding-day," said the matter-of-fact personage, "and she gradually pined away. Ah! but that was three hundred years ago; women do not love like that nowadays, and it is well they shouldn't." I involuntarily thought of Stella, and devoutly echoed the man's wish, "It is well they should not." For there exists not in creation a law which is not counterbalanced by a contrary law; everything in life is determined by the equilibrium of two contending forces. Even so in love, it is certain that he or she who gives too much, will not receive sufficient in return.

Swift stood now, as it were, alone in the world, already afflicted by many of those calamities that warn us of the end. The gradual decay of nature, accompanied by disease; the death and estrangement of many friends; the keen sensations of remorse—everything combined to darken his future prospects, despite the gleams of cheerfulness and satisfied literary ambition which still brightened his downward path. The applause of the public, the appreciation of his countrymen, still remained; but the busy life could afford no compensation for the absence of her whom, despite his many offences

against her, he tenderly loved, not as a lover, but as a father and friend. Well might he have said—

“ If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade.
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dared not speak before.”

Henceforth Swift's life is like that serenade which Don Juan, disguised, sings under a balcony, a melancholy and piteous song, breathing sorrow, distress, misjudged love, but the accompaniment to which is lively, strident, staccato; still the song struggles on, wailing, making itself heard above the false instrument, whose mocking tones want to turn it into derision, and seems to jeer at being obliged to go so slowly and mournfully. Nay, in a measure Swift becomes Don Juan himself, with whom the marble statue, just returned from the graves of Vanessa and Stella, sits down to supper. The Dean remains calm, collected, for some time, but the statue asks his hand; and when with an assumed indifference he has given it, the man is seized with a mortal chill, and falls into convulsions. They get more frequent, and at last send him raving mad, the intervals of frenzy leaving him a mere pitiable idiot. He is

following morning, when they e
they found him seated playing
He had lost his reason. Swift
sensible to all the softer fee
placed their skeleton in his bed
the bones for more than three y
of what passed around him. U
October, 1745, God merciful
terrible spectacle, and released t
his misery, degradation, and sha

* * *

“Meddle not with the isthmus
it through. Jove would have
had he wished it so,” said the
Cnidians. “Do not attempt t
the love of life by ascetism a
methodically practised; had I
could have found a means to acc
God; “for life is salvation, desp
Myriads of my creatures daily

to prove the chance exception to this universal goodness. Consider the indignation that will arise at the least mistake, the slightest inconsistency, the most trifling prevarication of those who wish to cheat the laws of Nature in appropriating her benefits. How will you contrive in order not to perpetually quarrel with destiny? Know that in man there are two occult powers, which combat each other until death; the one clear-seeing and cool, attaching itself to the reality, calculating, weighing it, and judging the past; the other thirsting for the future, and eager for the unknown. When Passion carries away man, Reason follows him weeping and warning him of the danger; but the moment he halts at the sight of Reason, the moment he says to himself, 'It is true, I am a fool, whither was I going?' Passion cries out loudly, 'Am I then doomed? must I then die?'" This latter cry Swift ventured to disregard. He threw to the winds the Divine maxim, that,

"Love is the happy privilege of mind;
Love is the reason of all living things."

Hence, when too late, there arose within him a revolt against the conclusions of his youth; his own instinct—that which drives man to action, to belief, to happiness, and against which cannot prevail the most subtle philosophical doctrines that accuse life of falsehood

“ Ce qu'il reste à la voile
Quand le dernier vent
S'abat sur le flot assou
Ce qu'il reste au chaun
Lorsque les ailes de l'o:
Sur la terre ont couché





PLATO OR PRIAPUS ?

ROUSSEAU.

“ Alas ! that love should be a blight and snare
To those who seek all sympathies in one.”

SHELLEY.

To Mary —. Dedication to Laon and Cythna.

“ Celui qui aime assez pour vouloir aimer un million de fois plus qu'il ne fait, ne cède en amour qu'à celui qui aime plus qu'il ne voudrait.”—*LA BRUYÈRE.*

“ Wie einst mit flehendem Verlangen
Pigmalion den Stein umschloz,

So schlang ich mich mit Liebesarmen
Um die Natur”

SCHILLER, *Die Ideale.*

IT is an unalterable fact that the world is apt to look askance at the man who sets up a claim to originality on his own behalf, and by virtue of this plea asks to have his actions judged by a different standard from that applied to the doings of ordinary mankind. Instead of admitting the claim, or at least thoroughly investigating its value, we use the cheap expedient of asserting that the actions were determined by the desire of justifying the claim advanced, rather than by

cause from effect, we stubbornly
former lies in the human soul
itself. For, after all, what is
living being in whose mind is
representation of things, which
as it were, and either remains
embryo, or else becomes a wish
the will, and thus grows into a
difference of this transformation
of the more or less complete de-
being simply a question of man
constituting the source of all of
man, depends entirely on general
elementary moral state. The
traced to the action of three causes
race—*i.e.*, to hereditary temperaments
according to peoples; to surroundings
the climate, the social conditions
circumstances; lastly, to the degree
which the development that we

Rousseau, in the opening sentences of his *Confessions*, tells us, "I am unlike any one I have seen; nay, I believe myself to be unlike any one that exists. If I am no better, I am at least different;" we are in common fairness obliged to examine in how far these lines are true. Fortunately this difficult task does not devolve upon us. Contemporaries and posterity alike have given it as their verdict that there was a perpetual discord between Rousseau and his age. Neither his thoughts nor his way of living were in unison with the society of his time. Partly the result of temperament, partly of neglected and faulty education, he was not as other men. Granted this, it will at once be seen that his case constitutes a special one, that we shall have to admit extenuating circumstances throughout, but especially when adjudging his love-affairs. Knowing, as we do, that the most awkward lout becomes graceful to a certain extent when under the influence of the love-passion, that a sort of poetical halo surrounds him for the nonce, that his whole being becomes so expanded as to drive him out of his prosaic matter-of-fact existence, we may imagine what a Rousseau, a moral and mental phenomenon in every common circumstance of life, will be under such auspices.

The first thing to strike us in the pages of Rousseau's *Autobiography* is the evidence of a

reason. To complete his intolerable vanity; he professes that no better man than he ever goes for nothing; sentiments on these alone man's worth should he proclaims himself to be loved if ever he did harm to any one knowingly or without wicked intention the enthusiastic professor and actor. Whosoever is led by sentiment or at least can only err honestly. good, he says. Man's heart is not it is tender, and tender for good.

Thus from his very boyhood self, or rather his sensibility deceives causes him to believe that he has every noble sentiment, while he is emotion. Self-deceived, he deceives dupe he becomes quack. We shall how this sentiment, ardent and fe

the age of five or six. By that time he had learnt to read—how, he knows not. His mother had left a collection of novels; “we sat reading them after supper, my father and I; we never left off until the end of the volume. Sometimes my father, hearing the swallows in the morning, said, as if ashamed of himself, ‘Let us go to bed, I am more childish than thou.’”

The effect of such baneful training need not be insisted upon. Rousseau himself tells us the result. “In a short time I acquired a knowledge of the passions, unique at my age. I had not the least idea of things, yet every sentiment was already known to me. I had conceived nothing, I had felt everything. These confused emotions imbued me with strange and romantic notions of human life, which subsequent experience and reflection were never able to eradicate.”

It would require a bold man to give excerpts from the first six books of Rousseau’s *Confessions*; they are annals and dreams of debauchery combined, from which the mind instinctively revolts, and yet to us they can be the only guides to the explanation of his subsequent life; for, like Ovid, Rousseau is the poet of his own failings. The sensuality of the boy, as portrayed by that boy when a wretched old man with a fondness that is disgusting, absolutely defies description; the English language has no words for it. At an

... imagination to wit
solely owe their birth. To
sublime speculations this
elevates itself, the basene.
somehow or other always
Rousseau's most abstracted
generous enthusiasm the origi
seen breaking forth, to belie
of his declamation.

Rousseau's father having ha
with the authorities of Gen
expatriation to submission to a
and little Jean-Jacques, in
cousin of his own age, was sen
minister at Bossey to be edu
upon Rousseau's childhood, t
he so unctuously relates anent l
other sex, neither could nor v
aim—

“ Non rationam di lor, ma gu

One worthf...

young lady at Canterbury, who jilts the hobbledehoy Cicisbeo to marry a farmer or corn-dealer.

The elder Rousseau, after his self-exile from Geneva, took up his abode at Nyon, whither his son frequently came to visit him. As is often the case with a winning, intelligent boy—and the future philosopher appears to have been such—he was petted and fondled by his father's female acquaintances, notably by a Mademoiselle de Vulson, a young lady of twenty-two. What was probably a feeling of kindness on the latter's part was taken by Jean-Jacques *au grand sérieux*. The girl noticing the eagerness of her eleven-years-old swain, continued the fun, and openly proclaimed him her gallant cavalier. "As for myself," says Rousseau, "who saw not the least disproportion between her and myself, I took the matter in thorough earnest; I abandoned myself with all my heart, or rather with all my head, for I was only smitten through that, though I was so to madness, my transports, agitation, fits of furious anger, being sufficiently ridiculous to make one split with laughter."

The vanity of the lad, a vanity which increased as he grew older, will best be seen by what follows. The girl sent him some sweetmeats and gloves, accompanied with an intimation of her marriage. He swore that he would never forgive her, and he never did. Twenty years

...never his love
cerned, whenever he considered
Throughout, this thin-skinned
talisman with which he spans
not to advance, however, but to
consciousness, not content with
his own feelings and princip
acquainted with their inter
instead of passing on, lingers t
occupied in comparing one pe
another, imagining scenes wher
running over the catalogue of p
novel picture of sensations, refu
into maturity, and mistaking the
course for its goal.

Bound apprentice, first to a sc
an engraver, he runs away from
calculating the consequences of
simply delighted with the prospe
and his own master. Having
hands of a Catholic craft

the rabble which came to sell its faith, a pension of two thousand francs granted to her by the King of Sardinia." Driven by hunger he starts for Annecy, where he at length arrives after a three days' journey.

The meeting with Madame de Warens forms so important an epoch in his life, that it had best be related by himself. "Fearful lest my personal address should not prove favourable I indited a beautiful letter, in which I displayed all my eloquence, to secure the goodwill of Madame de Warens." He meets with his future benefactress in a narrow pathway, bordered by a stream and by a wall enclosing the garden; is well received, and told to go into the house there to await her coming.

Who was Madame de Warens? We will not trust to Rousseau's estimate and description of her, but anticipating a little on his story, endeavour to represent her to the reader in the light she appears to us from the perusal of the *Confessions*.

When Rousseau first saw her she had been living apart from her husband some considerable time, and under the *nominal platonic* protection of Victor-Amadeus, who for reasons ostensibly religious, unknown in reality, allowed her a yearly pension.

Madame de Warens was what nowadays we

preaches the sanctity of both
superiority of passion over morality
who, not content with having
of St. Just, *Ceux qui s'aiment*
ægis for the satisfaction of her
has altered it for her own conv
qui ne s'aiment plus ne sont plus

Not that Rousseau saw her
ever afterwards. To him she
emblem of everything pure and
woman. Her more than equiv
in him an advocate, who bases t
a code of morals which its ridic
from loathsomeness. But to
shall have occasion to return.

After dinner, a council assembled
the hostess, Jean-Jacques, and
whose presence is not difficult o
a house like Madame de Warens
that the wanderer should be s
for and

as might be expected from the short time employed in its manufacture, and with about twenty francs in money wherewith to commence the world. Grim poverty thus staring him in the face, one would think that Rousseau left off building castles in the air; but it is remarkable that throughout his life there were two things that never forsook him, his self-reliance, bred from vanity rather than from a consciousness of his own powers, and a constant search for love-adventures. No matter how critical the situation, the presence of a woman was sufficient to weave a romance of the passions, in which he played the part of the hero. "That which distinguishes man from the brute," a cynic has said, "is drinking without thirst, and making love at all seasons." The latter trait, supposed to be distinctive of humanity, was in no one more fully developed than in the future author of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, a production which, with all its faults, stands alone amidst the corrupted French literature of the eighteenth century, as a praiseworthy attempt at moral teaching, and which, as we shall see anon, owes its birth entirely to Rousseau's aimless sensual passions. Well may the late Lord Lytton have exclaimed that "it is a strange truth, that to a man of cultivated mind, however perverted and vicious, there are vouchsafed gleams of brighter sentiments, irregular

perceive virtue, yet adopt vice.

Behold Rousseau then, a se-
less, the dole of the priests
indulging his instinct for *vagai*
regularly the mass of the Court
by his love for music, but equ.
to see whether among the
“there was not some young pri
my homage, and with whom I
some romance.”

It is Dr. Johnson, who, as
stated elsewhere, opined the
pleasure of kissing a duchess
is the same, that the sole
in the imagination. The gre
was probably right, though we
take him as an authority upo
But the imagination or illusio
part in love-affairs. Rousseau c
be blamed for seeking out a prin

Unable to obtain employment at his trade—which he knew but imperfectly—with a master, he went from house to house offering to engrave arms or monograms for a pittance. Accident led him to the establishment of a pretty young matron whose husband was absent on a journey, and who treated him with kindness.

Rousseau held the Ovidian theory that any woman may be won provided the snares be well laid; he also believed with the poet that her coyness was mostly feigned, and that if men would only refrain from entreating, the fair one would take the initiative; the latter dictum especially accorded well with Rousseau's inherent timidity, which, as he himself says, always stopped short at a positive declaration. "The more my lively imagination fired my blood, the more I looked like a bashful lover. One may conceive that this manner of making love does not lead to rapid progress, nor prove very dangerous to the virtue of those who are its objects." This inherent shyness was, as usual, an obstacle to the furtherance of his design, and compelled him, while consumed with desire, to remain virtually chaste. "That which made *him* drunk, *did not make him* bold." He was continually addressing to himself the question Lady Macbeth asks of her lord, "Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valour, as thou art in desire?"

orbed Cypassis, for the sin
was of the sex opposite to
handmaid. It is curious to
relish he returns to these epis
nearly fifty years; the passag
read like the autobiography o
fondly recounting his exploit
after this become a lacquey
Rousseau was on the high r
but there was no woman in
with Jean-Jacques was sufficie
with everything else. *Sans fe*
He found his way back to Ma

In reading Rousseau's *Con*
minded of the historical episc
the very church where he lies
the Constituent Assembly cha
tion of the church of St. Gen
grandiose name of the Panthe
temple on whose frieze was pl

like the Scotch parson who borrowed a congregation from a neighbouring clergyman, had to borrow her celebrities from among those already interred elsewhere.

Even so with Jean-Jacques. Whenever a new love-affair is in process of incubation, he unbuckles with a pedlar's importance his truss of declamation, preparing us by some high-sounding phrase for something grand, elevated, and out of the common. Instead of *les grands hommes* we have *les grands sentiments*, but like the French Pantheon, the sublime feelings were only on the frieze of his erotic temple; no neighbour being willing even to lend him some grand personage whereon to expend them, lest he should be corrupted by the new possessor.

What would any reader, unacquainted with Rousseau, expect from the following. It is the preamble to the interview with Madame de Warens, when for the second time he comes to implore her protection. "How my heart beat as I drew near to Madame de Warens' house! my legs trembled under me, my eyes were covered with a mist; I saw nothing, I heard nothing, I should have recognised no one; I was forced to stop several times to take breath and collect my senses." All this high-falutin for a woman nearly double his age. And not from fear of being refused shelter or assistance. No;

trembling of knees, beclouding
blindness, and all else, are s
Dante calls *prima indice del'*
peare calls "prodigious bir
pity of it is that with Rouss
either an abortion or a Garga
a healthy babe, that Jupi
saved from its parent's vo
into something divine. Th
Rousseau's appetite, made up
vanity, for ever craving its
gendered, self-destroyed.

Here is his meeting with M

"Scarce had I appeared
Warens' eyes than her manne
thrill ran through me (*Je tress*
of her voice. I throw myse
transported with the intenses
lips on her hand."* It is dec
take up his abode with her.

secret thoughts inspired already by her matured charms, the latter impregnated with a savour of anticipatory enjoyment, akin to the glutton's mental gorging of the banquet expected a month or two hence. These raptures are so thinly disguised by the gauze of ephemeral filial and maternal affection that we see through them in an instant. "To me she was the tenderest of mothers, who never sought her own pleasure, but always my welfare; and if the senses entered into my attachment for her, it was not to change its nature, but only to render it more exquisite, to intoxicate me with the charm of having a young and beautiful mama, whom it was delicious to caress; I say caress in the strictest meaning of the word, for she never dreamt of sparing me either kisses or the tenderest maternal caresses, and it never entered into my heart to abuse them. People will say that in the end we had relations of a different kind; I admit, but they must wait. I cannot say everything at once."

It would be difficult to find a parallel to such a state of mind. To enhance the fervour of a corrupted imagination, revelling in the past delights of an unbounded voluptuousness, he must first picture to himself the woman as his mother to turn her into his mistress afterwards. In vain do we look into ancient mythology, into the

...in good faith—as a man
As yet we have said li
Madame de Warens, nor w
analyse the character of a
cipal fault was a want of
Both goodnatured and kind
beyond her means, with a cu
not of the highest order, at
average, she must be regarde
whose conduct was and ever
plicable if judged by the c
code of the world. Free, if
Rousseau, from the least ta
morality or sensuousness, she
no scruple of abandoning he
tations of the first comer.
want akin to hunger, with t
man is nearly always ready to
respect to the sexual passion, hi
so sustained nor so regular as
A part of the

those who craved it at her hands, any more than she thought it right to refuse pecuniary assistance to those who wanted it.

This said, let us return to Jean-Jacques.

Curious as it may appear, with a mind debauched beyond example, Rousseau was up till now a *de facto* Joseph. While every particle of innocence had fled from his mind, he himself had remained spotlessly pure. And yet the paradoxical in this is easily reconciled. To him the sober meal of the physical passions was unattractive. He wanted a banquet adorned by all the display a fantastic imagination could conjure up. We can best illustrate our version of Rousseau's fastidiousness by the story of the dogs who were matched to eat for a wager. One owner took care not only to feed his animal upon the coarsest and scantiest of food, but managed to get hold of the canine antagonist, plying him with the choicest morsels. When the time for the contest arrived, plain fare was set before both; the starved one devoured avidiously, the pampered one refused to taste. Jean-Jacques had an imagination fed upon the *recherché* dishes of his own hatching, a vulgar *conquête* filled him with disgust and aversion. It would have required a trick similar to that played by "Farmer George" upon a dainty nobleman, to make him cheerfully accept the homely roast

beef and apple-dumpling of love. The bread was there, the buns were wanting. Even when the latter came within his reach, during an absence of Madame de Warens on a journey to Paris, undertaken for some unexplained reasons, his shyness prevented him from taking advantage of them. After all, in those days, and later on also, Jean-Jacques was not unlike a country lout, who having dreamt all his life of *symposia* in the halls of the great, sits on the edge of his chair when admitted to them, and feels too timid to partake and enjoy. "It is a singular thing," he says of himself, "that my imagination is never more agreeably excited than when my situation is least pleasant, and that, on the contrary, it is least smiling when everything is joyous around me. My foolish head refuses to subject itself to circumstances; it wants to create, but cannot embellish. At best it paints reality as it is; it is only able to ornate imaginary objects." The collective adventures of Baron Munchausen, Don Quixote, Gulliver, Gil Blas, &c., would appear tame and commonplace compared to what in reality befell Jean-Jacques in the interval of separation from Madame de Warens. By turns music-master, whilst scarcely able to decipher the simplest air; interpreter to a Greek archimandrite, tutor to a young officer; it is impossible to read his story without concluding

that, if Mr. Ruskin's saying be true, "that a man's destiny is mapped out for him at his birth," the deity of *vagabondage* must have presided at the future philosopher's.

To counteract this peripatetic tendency was Madame de Warens' first care when her *protégé* rejoined her at Chambéry. Her influence obtained him a situation in a Government surveying office; a useful career was thrown open to him; but no sedentary occupation satisfied Rousseau. An inborn love of music made him turn once more to that art, with more success than the first time; for we find that he managed to get some pupils, much against the wishes of his kind friend, Madame de Warens, who, from whatsoever light her foibles may be regarded, meant well to him who so strangely had been cast upon her bounty.

"Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak."

I will not dispute the proposition with Congreve, though there is another side to the question. Many a maiden's heart, placid and serene as the unruffled lake beneath a summer sky, owes the first stirring of the passions entirely to music. Well may Benedict exclaim, "Is it not strange that sheep's guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?" and he might have added, "out of women's bodies too." Of that

unsatisfactory episode—unsatisfactory from the parent's view—between Klesmer and his pupil in *Daniel Deronda*, music was the first cause. Amphions and Apollos are dangerous animals—wolves in sheeps' clothing. Timotheus did whatever he liked with Alexander when once he had harped that monarch into a tumult of feeling. The gallant troubadours played sad havoc with the matrimonial peace of mediæval husbands. Whenever a young lady makes an *escalandre*, *mésalliance*, or something equally disagreeable, it is ten to one that the groom or the music-master is a partner in the mischief. Byron's lines—

"The harp the monarch-minstrel swept,
 * * * * *
 It gave *him* virtues not *his* own"

might easily be paraphrased this way, and become susceptible of more than one meaning.

Of the temptations thus placed in his way, and their concomitants, we will, as usual, take Rousseau's own version. After enumerating the charms of some of his aristocratic pupils, he continues—

"I had also some learners among the middle class, and, among others, one who was the indirect cause of a change of relation (with Madame de Warens), of which I am bound to speak, as, after all, I wish to tell everything. She was the

daughter of a grocer, a perfect model of a Greek statue, and I might unhesitatingly quote her as the most beautiful girl I ever saw, if true beauty could exist without life and soul. Her indolence, her coldness, her want of feeling, went beyond the credible. It was equally impossible to please and to anger her, and I am convinced that whatsoever one would have attempted on her would have been tolerated, not from taste, but from stupidity. The mother, not wishing to run the risk, did not leave her for an instant. By having her taught to sing, by providing her with a young master, she did her best to animate her; but without avail. Whilst the master tried to incite the daughter, the mother incited the master, scarcely more efficaciously. . . . Every morning on my arrival I found my coffee *à la crème* waiting for me; the mother never failed to welcome me with a well-aimed kiss on the lips, which, from curiosity, I should have liked to return to the daughter, just to see how she would have taken it. The whole thing was done so simply and carelessly, that when M. Lard (the husband and father) was there, the kissing and teasing went on as usual.

“I lent myself to all these caresses with my customary clumsiness, taking them in good faith for marks of pure friendship. I was, however, seriously inconvenienced by them at times, for

the vivacious Madame Lard became rather exacting, and if during the day I passed the shop without entering, there were grumblings. I was obliged, when pressed for time, to go round by another street, knowing that it was not so easy to leave as to enter.

“Madame Lard took too much notice of me for me not to occupy myself about her. I grew sensible of her attentions. I spoke of them to mama (Madame de Warens) as of a matter without mystery; if there had been one I should have spoken none the less, for to make a secret of aught whatsoever would have been impossible to me; my heart was open to her as before Heaven. She did not view the affair with the same simplicity as I did. She saw advances where I had seen nothing but friendship; she judged that Madame Lard, making it a point of honour to leave me less stupid than she had found me, would hit upon some means of making herself understood; and apart from the injustice of another woman charging herself with the instruction of her *protégé*, she had motives more worthy of herself to shield me from the snares to which my youth and profession exposed me.”

This, and a trap of a more dangerous character, laid for him at the same time by one of Madame de Warens' rivals, opened “mama's” eyes to the dangers threatening her darling.

True, he had escaped the temptation this time, but who could answer for the future. Precautions and preservatives were necessary, and these Madame de Warens determined to adopt. These "precautions and preservatives"—we use Jean-Jacques' own words—of Madame de Warens were not unlike the kindness of that hangman, who refused his culprit some beer, and recommended whisky instead, as he was suffering from gout.

"Mama perceived that to avert the peril of my youth, it was time to treat me like a man, and this she did, but in the most singular fashion ever invented by woman under similar circumstances. Her air was more grave and her conversation more sententious than usual. To the frolicsome gaiety with which she generally seasoned her instructions, succeeded all at once a uniform, measured tone, that was neither familiar nor severe, but which seemed to bode an explanation. After having searched in vain within myself the reason of this change, I asked her; it was what she waited for. She proposed a stroll in the little garden for the following morning; we were there at an early hour. She had taken her measures that we should be left alone for the day, which she employed to prepare me for the favours she had in store for me, not like any other woman would have done, by strategy and provocation, but by conversation

full of sentiment and reason, more calculated to instruct than to seduce me, and which appealed rather to my heart than to my senses. However useful and excellent the discourse she treated me to, though it was nothing less than cold or melancholy, I did not give it all the attention it deserved, and it did not stamp itself upon my memory, as would have been the case at other times. Her beginning, this air of preparation, filled me with uneasiness; while she spoke, musing and preoccupied, in spite of myself, I was less heedful of what she said than of what she was aiming at, and the moment I understood—not an easy matter—the novelty of the idea, which, since I lived with her, had never once entered my mind, seizing hold of me altogether, left me no longer master to think of what she said. I but thought of her, and listened not.”

Rousseau anticipates our disgust by asking whether we do not think that a woman, already possessed by some one else (Madame de Warens was at this time living in the closest intimacy with her man-servant, a fact well known to Jean-Jacques), was degrading herself by dividing her favours? “If,” says he, “the reader expects that a feeling of contempt, bred by this knowledge, caused a lukewarmness in the sentiments she had inspired me with, he is mistaken. This sharing it, it is true, gave me a cruel pang, as

much from natural delicacy as from deeming it unworthy of her and myself, but it did not alter my feelings for her, and I can swear that I never loved her more tenderly than when I so little desired to possess her." He tells us that he shrank, as it were, from the consummation of his passion. "I knew her chaste heart and cold temperament sufficiently well to imagine for a moment that the gratification of the senses had any share in her self-abandonment; I was perfectly certain that the wish of preserving me from dangers, otherwise unavoidable, and to keep me entirely to myself and my duties, were her only motives for transgressing a duty, which she did not regard in the same light as other women. I would have liked to say to her, 'No, mama, it is not necessary; I will answer for myself without this.' But I dared not; firstly, because it was not a thing easy to say, and also because I really felt that it would not have been true, and that in fact there was but one woman who could shield me from other women, and make me proof against temptation. Without wishing to possess her, I was glad that she took away my desire to possess others, so much did I consider anything that would estrange me from her as a misfortune."

That which follows, the defence of Madame de Warens' character, her justification, an encomium

Love," endeavoured to fit h
the world, by having him
complishments, such as danc
of which were so many be
him, his only wish consisti
near and with her.

If, our repugnance notwi
consented to quote many of
reader will easily pardon us,
throughout Jean-Jacques' l
he or some one else figure as
little coigns of natural histo
uninviting, are absolutely ne
of this essay, which aims a
curious blending of his real
admixture of fiction sowed t
to ripen afterwards into undou
prose love-epic of the eighteen

"They are all gods except
Bossuet of the Church."

combustible temperament, that unlucky chapter of natural history which he at all times intercalates in the narrative of his passions, and which he looks upon as a sure mark of originality, is after all nothing but a commonplace, to be found in the confessions of almost every young man; it is Rousseau's vanity that exalts it into an attribute of almost superhuman perfection. It was, perhaps, the unconscious reflection of his age, in which an inexhaustible fund of sensibility was claimed by every nonentity who donned it, the same as he powdered his hair; to be endowed with no more than that would have placed him only on a level with the others, hence he must be combustible—must show himself to be the greatest effort of nature at creating a paradox—he must attudinize as a deity.

This latter theory is almost forced upon one in the perusal of the *Confessions*. That Jean-Jacques as a boy of eighteen should have been content to play second fiddle—to use a vulgarism—to a country lout like Madame de Warens' man-servant is excusable enough, but that after a lapse of many years he should have still found means to sublimate this more than disgusting arrangement can only be accounted for by the proposition advanced, that he wanted to outdo every one of his contemporaries in extravagance. We have but to remind the reader

that Rousseau wrote his autobiography in the Watteau-shepherd period, when the *Parc aux Cerfs* was in its full glory, when personal vanity was the first article in the common creed, when to be *outré* was to be everything, when to be prosaic was social death.

By the light of the foregoing, the following may read less incredible. "I am ignorant whether Claude Anet (Madame de Warens' manservant) suspected the intimacy of our commerce. I have reason to believe that it was no secret to him. He was a far-seeing but discreet young fellow, who never spoke against his convictions, but who not always openly declared them. Without giving me the least hint that he was cognisant of my relations with his mistress, from his behaviour he seemed to be so, and this conduct was assuredly not caused by meanness of soul; but having embraced the principles of his mistress, he could not disapprove that she should act accordingly. Though as young as she, he was so settled and grave that he rather looked upon us as two children to be indulged, and we both regarded him as a sober, respectable man, whose good opinion should not be trifled with. It was only when she had been unfaithful to him that I fully knew how attached she was to him. Knowing this, I thought, felt, and breathed but through her; she showed me how

much she loved him, that I might love him equally much, and she prided herself less upon her friendship for him than upon his esteem for her, because it was the feeling which I could most fully share. How often she softened our hearts and made us embrace with tears, telling us that we were both indispensable to the happiness of her life. . . . Thus there was established between us three an intercourse (*une société*) unexampled, perhaps in this world. All our wishes, our cares, our hearts were in common; nothing passed beyond this little circle. The habit of living together, and living exclusively, became so great, that when at meal-times one of the three was absent, or a fourth joined, everything was upset; and despite our peculiar *liaisons*, a *tête-à-tête* was less sweet than our reunion."

Humiliating as it may be to the essayist to have to confess that his subject puzzles him, we will candidly admit that in this instance we are at loss to apply any metaphysical or philosophical test to Rousseau's conduct, so as to draw our deductions therefrom. Is it the outcome of the philosophy of temperament? Is it to corroborate and confirm the theory laid down in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, to which we will refer hereafter, that he writes all this? We know not.

Be this as it may, the triple alliance lasted

Down the precipice ste
And end his career in t

In other words than t
through the kindness of a
the beggar on horseback an
devil." A junior partner
assiduously attend to his bu
head of the firm and he w
others, in many cases bec
director of companies, ins
everything goes straight at h
sole possessor, grew sick of
He wished for "fresh fields
" I had a tender mother, a
and friend, but I wanted a
her in a thousand fashions t
the self-conjured change."
him to travel, a love-intrigu

On the plea that Madame de Warens' happiness was his first consideration, to which he was willing to sacrifice his own, Jean-Jacques refused the offer of the renewal of their former *liaison*. With all his boasted superiority this Rousseau was very much like other men at the age of twenty; the cynicism that made him afterwards paint his character far worse than it really was may be safely ascribed to assumption. He could exonerate—nay, eulogise—Madame de Warens' inconstancy when he was its object, and profited by it; he could not forgive—despite his asseverations—when he became its victim. Love-intrigues please us more than marriage, for the same reason, perhaps, that novels are more amusing than history. That Tom Tiddler's ground of the sexual passions, called "romantic relations," is to a legalised union pretty well what the congregation of betting-men on a racecourse outside the authorised ring is to those assembled within. You may lose your money with both, but the guarantee for the honesty of the latter company is better than that of the former. A man's wife may be as faithful or as faithless as his mistress, but the first has something to risk; she cannot better her position, while she may make it worse; the second, on the contrary, when once convinced that her lover will not marry her, may try her chances elsewhere.

Wedlock is the never-fading mirage with compromised woman. The outside betting-man offers you greater odds ; *la bonne fortune*, from its very name, tempts with greater delights ; but "high interest means low security," said the Duke of Wellington, and the principle applies equally to morals and to commerce.

Had Rousseau left Madame de Warens immediately on the discovery of the real state of affairs, we could but have commended the manliness, which, however late in the day, prompted such an act ; but like Achilles sulking in his tent, he remained, evincing the utmost indifference, but making Madame de Warens and her new paramour uncomfortable by his presence. It is only after a lapse of months that he moves to Lyons, ever on the look out for love-intrigues, seeking an object for his burning passion, without much result, however, in the town of silk. Nay, he returns after a year, not disinclined to gather up the broken threads of his relations with mama, and to become once more a player at *une parti à trois*. This time his stay is of short duration, and in another month we find him in Paris, submitting to the *Académie des Sciences* a new method of noting music, and as usual getting enamoured of the first woman he comes in social contact with. This happens to be Madame Dupin, wife of a farmer-general.

The lady treated the matter as it deserved. Madame de Broglie, another lady of his acquaintance, obtained him the situation of secretary to the French Embassy at Venice, in which respectable and delicate situation he conducted himself with great integrity and credit. His quarrel with the Chevalier de Montaigu, and subsequent dismissal by that wrong-headed ambassador, forms one of the very few exceptions of a contention in which Jean-Jacques was in the right.

Returned to Paris, he, after some time, took up his abode at his old quarters, the Hôtel Saint Quentin, which had changed hands, and where he met Thérèse le Vasseur, "the only true consolation which Heaven vouchsafed me in my misery, and which alone makes it bearable."

"The first time I saw this girl (she was the servant) I was struck with her modest behaviour, and still more with her lively and gentle look, the like of which I had never met with." The place seems to have been one of those boarding-houses where the utmost license of speech and conduct was allowed. The boarders consisted of Irish abbés, Gascons, and others of the same ilk. "They teased and provoked the girl; I took her part. Immediately I was assailed by an avalanche of chaff. (*Aussitôt les lardons tombèrent sur moi.*) If I had had not the least

inclination for this poor girl, compassion and a feeling of opposition would have given me such. I have ever been fond of modesty in manner and conversation, especially with the softer sex. I openly constituted myself her champion. I perceived that she was sensible of my care for her; and her looks animated by a gratitude she dared not express by words became the more eloquent.

“She was very shy; so was I. Our intimacy, to which this mutual disposition should have proved an obstacle, nevertheless progressed very rapidly. The landlady, once aware of it, was furious, and her brutal treatment favoured my affairs the more with the girl, who having no other support but me in the house, grieved when I went out, and sighed for the return of her protector. She saw in me an honest man, and she was not mistaken. I saw in her a sensible girl, artless, and free from coquetry. I was not mistaken either. I told her beforehand that I would never abandon nor marry her. Love, esteem, naïve simplicity, were the ministers of my triumph, her tender and honest heart making me happy without any boldness on my side.

.
“I had at first sought nothing but a passing amusement. I saw that I had done more, and

had given myself a companion. When somewhat used to this excellent girl, a little reflection on my position made me feel that while only thinking of my pleasures, I had accomplished a good deal towards my happiness. I wanted in lieu of my quenched ambition a lively sentiment that should fill my heart. Not to disguise the matter, I wanted a successor to mama; since I could live with her no longer, I wanted some one who would live with her pupil, some one in whom I should find the simplicity, the docility of heart, which she (mama) had found in me. It was necessary that the peace of private and domestic life should make up for the brilliant career I had renounced. (Some of his projects had failed.) When I was absolutely alone there was a void in my heart; it wanted some one to fill it. Fate had taken from me, alienated, partly at least, she for whom Nature had made me. Henceforth I was alone, for there never existed for me a middle course between all and nothing. I found in Thérèse the substitute I needed; through her my life passed as happily as was compatible with the course of events.

“At first I wanted to form her mind; I lost my time over it. Her mind is what Nature made it; culture and care are wasted on it. I am not ashamed to confess that she never could read fluently, though she writes passably well.

She has never been able
the twelve months of th
know a single figure, no
efforts to show her. Sh
money, nor calculate the
Her words often express th
wishes to say. I once ma
phrases to amuse Madame
her *quiproquos* have becc
circles I used to frequent.
limited understanding, nay,
becomes an excellent adviser
stances. Often, in Switzerl
France, in the catastrophes
myself, she has perceived th
looked ; she gives the best cou
me from dangers into which
and with ladies of the high
great and with princes, her
answers and her

sentiment nourishes the mind as well as the heart, and there is no need to seek one's ideas elsewhere. I lived with my Thérèse as pleasantly as with the greatest genius of the universe. Her mother, proud of having been brought up formerly with the Marchioness de Monpipeau, laid claim to being a wit, wanted to direct Thérèse's mind, and spoilt, by her astuteness, the artlessness of our connexion. The annoyance of this bore made me surmount somewhat the silly shame of not daring to show myself with Thérèse in public, and henceforth we had many a *tête-à-tête*, country walks, and little collations, which to me were delicious. I saw that she loved me sincerely, and it increased my fondness. This sweet intimacy supplied the place of everything to me; the future no longer interested me, or only interested me as the prolongation of the present; I had no other wish than to insure its duration.

“This attachment rendered all other dissipation superfluous and insipid. I only went out to go to Thérèse; her home became almost mine.”

Thus far Rousseau, whose testimony is worth having, seeing that when he gave it the intimacy was more than a score of years old. There is no question of “new brooms” here.

To many it has been a matter of surprise that Jean-Jacques should have formed an intimacy

with such a girl as Thérèse le Vasseur, a woman whose intellectual standard, to say the least, was very low, who was not recommended by personal beauty, whose position in the world was humbler even than his own. They have been tempted to exclaim,

“’Tis strange to see the humours of these men,
These great aspiring spirits, that should be wise.”

“Wise,” Jean-Jacques never was. Be it remembered also that whatever his aspirations may have been, he had not done anything as yet to justify them, nor is it at all certain that he was aware of his power. Thérèse was a servant; he had been a lacquey, and worse. But let us assume the contrary, and grant that he was fully conscious of the fame in store for him. Let us suppose that he was as great as Mirabeau, when that giant intellect discarded one of the most lovable women, Mademoiselle de Nehra, to take up with the vile wife of a vile printer; as great as Raphael, who refused the niece of a cardinal to remain with *La Fornarina*; as great as Adrian Brouwer, when the Dutchman elected to leave Rubens’ magnificent palace to share both the spouse and filthy home of baker Van Craesbeek; as great as Socrates, when the sage married Xantippe; as great as Palissy, when the potter married a scold; as great as Hazlit, who made love to his landlady’s daughter; as great as

Goethe, who married and loved Christiana Vulpius.

“Oftmals hab' ich geirrt, und habe mich wieder gefunden
Aber glücklicher nie; nun ist diess mädchen mein Glück'.
Ist auch dieses ein Irrthum, so schont mich, ihr Klügeren
Götter,
Und benehmt mir ihn erst drüben am Kalten Gestad.”

Could Milton and Dryden, Addison, Byron, and a thousand others, have said so much as the great German for the women they had taken to their homes, and who in every conventional and social respect were their equals, if not their superiors? “Conventional fitness is a fine basis for a marriage in its own way; but then the marriage must remain in the conventional groove,” says George Eliot, and she is, as usual, correct. “I keep my illusions and vices for outdoors; at home I love the reality and the virtues,” remarked the Roman emperor, whom we have already quoted, to his spouse, thus justifying a prosaic choice. *Qu'importe le facon, pourvu qu'on ait l'ivresse?* asks Alfred de Musset. And this intoxication Thérèse gave Rousseau, because she was good and gentle, and, what is more, the only *facon* within his reach at the time. Besides, paradoxical as it may seem, sentiment is not very delicate—it is brutal and romantic at once; it is brutal, because the senses form its principal ingredient; it is romantic, because the ardour of the senses produces an

intoxication which embellishes everything. *En amour*, says Balzac, and he is a great authority upon a certain kind of love, *on a toujours l'esprit clairvoyant et le cœur aveugle*. It is because the passions proceed from the heart and the senses, not from the mind; hence a great man is seldom ashamed of marrying or living with a woman beneath him; he thinks that greatness was intended by Nature for him; if she has the same he deems it an infringement of his prerogative. His love is in proportion to her obedience, and his love contains his happiness. His impartiality, bred from reason, is kept for abstract merit or demerit, which neither he nor any one else ever saw.

There are divine moments that come to certain mortals, when love is satisfied with the imaginary completeness of the beloved object—when comparison is at a standstill, if not at an end—when the boy-god takes us by the hand and introduces us into the fairy-land, which only becomes a sojourn of patience and trial when the introducer vanishes from our side. These are the moments when we follow the guide, despite the world's estimate—despite the finger of wisdom pointing the other way. Who can say that we should have fared better had we gone in the contrary direction?

For the time being Rousseau was satisfied with the imaginary completeness of Thérèse

le Vasseur, conscious, perhaps, that his imagination had played him too many tricks already to trust easily to it again, or to require too much realising at its hands. We are the more confirmed in this supposition, seeing that from the very beginning he did not foster any of those great illusions which we heard him enunciate with respect to Madame de Warens. It is true that a record of them was written many years after they had occurred, that Madame de Warens appeared to him through a long vista of reminiscences and regrets; and distance softens everything. Thérèse, on the contrary, represented at the time of the composition of the *Confessions* the sober and somewhat hard actuality and result of experience.

Nor would we be prepared to say that Rousseau did not do a wise act when he took Thérèse for his companion. Ignorant and unpolished, devoid of the meretricious, philosophical tendencies so common with the educated ladies of her day, she had that which they lacked, an essentially feminine heart; she had implanted in her what is the best gift of Nature to woman, the sympathetic instinct of maternity. Nowhere is that instinct better displayed than in the struggle with her lover respecting the destiny of her children. Jean-Jacques may philosophise, may bring every kind of specious argument to bear,

of the nascent ambition
distinguishing himself by
is neither a woman-philo
sentiment; simply a mot
cient for her to feel and
her duty. Shortly after
mother for the first time
acquaintance of Madame d
her that of Madame d'H
who were to play a most
life.

Rousseau was not unlike
just spoken of. His conne
marriage with Thérèse we
altar of reality and virtue
vices went their way nevert
and mutual attachment betw
Thérèse was not sufficient to
his heart, but of his imag
children remained with him

received everywhere, his career promised every chance of brilliancy, a brilliancy marred in the end by himself only.

Madame d'Epinay was like Madame Dupin, the wife of a farmer-general. She conceived a sincere friendship for Jean-Jacques. He was a constant guest at her country house, *La Chevrette*, and in the end she offered him an establishment of his own on one of her neighbouring estates, *L'Ermitage*, named so from a cottage inhabited by her *protégé*, and become famous since then from its associations. Madame d'Houdetot was her sister-in-law. The first time Jean-Jacques met her was on the eve of her marriage.

In the course of events, Rousseau, once established at *L'Ermitage*, it was most natural that Madame d'Houdetot should visit him there. Circumstances conspired to render our hero more isolated than he had been during the last seven years. Thérèse's mother by her plots and contrivances disturbed the domestic peace. Always more or less given to retrospective meditations, his present habitation was of all spots the most conducive and favourable to dreaming.

"I indulged in my meditations in the most delightful season of the year, in the month of June, under the fresh foliage, to the song of the nightingale, to the murmuring of the brook."

While thus enjoying the fields, the sun, his

and graceful *rencontres* w
relished. Those are the
in the actual enjoymen
when the memory fondly
came back to his mind's
knows how many charmir
ful figures conjured up
presence of summer, by th
Hermitage, such as come
are growing old without e
lived without frivolousness
remembering, he also bega
loved more purely and a
loved; a natural regret e
have loved honestly, for
prevent themselves from re
which they voluntarily or
out of their reach; a regr
with those who have loved
purely for

they have been unable to obtain in their youth. Such were the dreams, the reminiscences, the regrets that occupied Rousseau in his lonely walks, and in his peaceful rest under the great old oaks of the *Hermitage*. But what? to love at forty-five? Was it at all possible? Or else to die without having employed that faculty of love. Alas! Alas! And thus it came to pass that Rousseau, not wishing to love at his age for fear of ridicule and domestic jealousy, at the same time unable to relinquish the wish to express what he felt, conceived a love novel, contenting himself to imagine that what he could not or would not do, freer, with his soul more enamoured, perhaps, of the heroines of his imagination than of those of the world.

The danger of this dwelling in dreamland is, that if at that moment a woman presents herself, who is beautiful or only graceful, the soul on the *qui vive* for love, loves at first sight, and recognises in the meeting that charms and intoxicates it, the heroine of its dreams. Appeared upon the scene Madame d'Houdetot. Rousseau did not love her immediately, but he began to think of it, and it is from the blending of the recollections of his youth, and the emotions which his tranquil life at the *Hermitage* gave him, from his dreams, and the regrets of his soul, which had discovered that it had never loved as

himself says, "savoured
chapter of a novel. She
stuck fast in the muddy
wanted to alight and
journey on foot. Her
soaked through, she sa
slush, her servants had t
extricate her, but at last
mitage in boots, making
laughter, in which I cou
seeing her in such a plight
from top to toe; Thérèse
and I engaged her to lay a
partake of a rustic collatio
to relish much. It was
stayed but a short while;
became so animated, and
she appeared disposed to r
did not execute her plan

my life, I may perhaps be allowed to enter into some details respecting this affair."

A doctor was mentioning the case of a woman who had several children, and died during her confinement. "With her last child!" he added, quite emphatically.

Rousseau did well to remind us that his last love was the first and only one in his life, for we naturally recollect Madame de Warens and Mademoiselle de Serré, of whom we did not speak, as the affair led to no results, but to which lady there exists a love-epistle in his correspondence. We do not even refer to the many minor ones. However, it is all of a piece with him who maintained that "the lover who changes, does not change; he simply commences or begins to love."

Was Madame d'Houdetot, who inspired such an ardent passion, handsome or pretty? Neither one nor the other. Rousseau himself says that she was not handsome. Her face was marked with the small-pox, her complexion lacked brightness, she was short-sighted, and her eyes were rather round; but she looked young for all that, and her physiognomy, lively and gentle at once, was pleasing. She had a natural and agreeable wit; in which gaiety, mad-cappishness and *naïveté* most happily blended; her conversation abounded with charming sallies, coming unbidden and in spite of herself." This is a portrait fragrant

with Rousseau's passion for Madame d'Houdetot. Others, drawn by her contemporaries, notably by her sister-in-law, Madame d'Epinay, agree in representing her as a most charming, graceful woman.

What really made Madame d'Houdetot so delightful was her *jolie âme, schöne Seele* as the Germans have it. We in England have no equivalent, except "beautiful soul," for this favourite epithet of the last century; which means a graceful, naïve, and honest disposition; not that kind of honesty which is rigid, and loves and does its duty, but the honesty which consists in not disguising one's sentiments; the honesty that caused Madame d'Houdetot to be mad with delight at the departure of her husband for the army, and crazy with despair at the departure of her lover the Marquis de Saint-Lambert. For that Madame d'Houdetot had a lover need hardly be said.

" As soon

Seek roses in December, ice in June,

Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff"

as find a woman of quality in that epoch without a paramour. If there were one to be found, it would have been as we find nowadays the "ice in June," hidden in a cellar, or like the "corn in chaff," overlooked by mistake or not worth troubling about. Were it not a paradox we

should say that *la morale*, by which we mean the code of morals, was more corrupt than the morals themselves, a thing happening frequently; whilst, on the contrary, there are periods when the morals are more corrupt than *la morale*. In the seventeenth century, and under Louis XIV., the code of morals was Christian, and the morals mostly Pagan. In the eighteenth century, towards 1750, the idea of the law was effaced in man's soul, but the licence of principle was greater than the licence of conduct. In that strange and deliciously wicked society duties were transposed and inverted rather than destroyed. Madame d'Houdetot remained ever faithful to M. de Saint-Lambert, and M. d'Houdetot, who, at the time when he married his wife, madly loved a lady whom he could not marry, remained also faithful to this intimacy. This lady died forty-eight years after his marriage, during which time he loved her fondly and constantly, the same as did his wife M. de Saint-Lambert, which made the husband exclaim—"Madame d'Houdetot and I both had the vocation of fidelity, only there was a misunderstanding;" and, let us add, a misapplication.

One anecdote to show the spirit of those times, and we return to Jean-Jacques and his fresh *amour*.

One morning the Prince de Ligne, leaving the

apartments of his wife, runs against the lady's lover, embraces him, and laughing like one possessed, whispers in his ear, "*Mon cher, cette nuit je t'ai fait cocu!*"

As we have said, Madame d'Houdetot was lively, *spirituelle*, elegant, made charming verses, had a kind word for every one; no wonder that Rousseau fell a victim.

There are two versions of this passion; one supplied by himself, the other in the *Mémoires of Madame d'Epinay*. They do not differ materially; the former contains a strong element of romance unconsciously interwoven by its author; the latter may be considered the more veracious.

Let us look at the romance for a moment.

Saint-Lambert had departed for the army, and Madame d'Houdetot was alone and *triste*. She loved to dwell upon her affection for Saint-Lambert; she spoke of it to Rousseau. The latter was planning his *Nouvelle Héloïse*, and as he says himself, "he was intoxicated with love without an object. The impossibility of finding the beings of my fancy in real life, drove me into the land of chimeras." Seeing Madame d'Houdetot, and hearing her constantly speak of love, though for some one else, she gradually became the object of these chimeras. He beheld his Julie in Madame d'Houdetot, and he saw

her such as he pictured his heroine. Madame d'Houdetot invested Julie with a bodily and mental tangibleness, Julie lent her imaginary beauty to this mind and body. "She spoke to me of Saint-Lambert in impassioned love-strains. Contagious force of love! in listening to her, in feeling myself near her, a delicious thrill ran through me, the like of which I had never experienced near any one. She spoke, I felt myself moved; I merely imagined myself to be interested in her feelings, when similar ones were invading my heart. I drained with long draughts the poisoned cup, tasting as yet nothing but its sweets. In short, without I or she being aware of it, she inspired me with all that she expressed for her lover."

Sings Alfred de Musset:

" Nous causâmes longtemps; elle était simple et bonne,
Ne sachant pas le mal, elle faisait le bien,
Des richesses du cœur, elle me fit l'aumône,
Et tout en écoutant comme le cœur se donne,
Sans oser y penser, je lui donnai le mien,
Elle emportait ma vie, et n'en eut jamais rien."

With the exception of the last paragraph, *L'enfant du Siècle* might have painted Rousseau's passion in these lines instead of one of his own, for a time came when Madame d'Houdetot knew of Jean-Jacques' love. "Alas!" laments Jean-Jacques, "it was very late in the day, it was very cruel to burn like this with a passion

no less ardent than unhappy for a woman whose heart was full of love for another. Notwithstanding the extraordinary emotions which I experienced when near her, I was at first unaware of what had happened to me. It was only after she had left that, wishing to think of Julie, I was astounded at being unable to think of any one but Madame d'Houdetot. Then the veil dropped from my eyes."

At first Rousseau felt frightened. To conquer his love he invoked his moral scruples, his sentiments, his principles, shame, faithlessness, crime, the abuse of a trust confided to him by friendship; the ridicule of being consumed at his age by the most extravagant passion for one whose heart was no longer free; who could neither reciprocate in the present, nor leave him any hope for the future. All in vain. It was not long before his conscience beguiled itself with a sophism, as is the wont of all accommodating consciences. What had he to fear from a love that was unshared? Where was the peril? "What scruples," thought I, "need I have with regard to a folly only injurious to myself? Am I a young *cavalier*, of whom Madame d'Houdetot is to stand in fear? Would not one think, from my presumptuous qualms, that my gallantry, my air, my appearance, will prove a temptation to

her? Eh, poor Jean-Jacques, go to, love at thine ease and in all security, and fear not that thy sighs will injure Saint-Lambert." Thus self-reassured he abandoned himself to his love. But as love excites one's passions rather than corrects them, though enamoured he was mistrustful, defiant, uneasy and irritable as it was in his nature to be. What if Madame d'Houdetot, to whom he had confided his passion, should turn him into ridicule! what if she were but amusing herself with his superannuated compliments! what if she should let Saint-Lambert into the secret, and the two should conspire to turn his poor head, and to sneer at him. That was enough. He lost his senses, his suspicions found vent. Madame d'Houdetot at first took it all in good part. "Then followed," he says, "bursts of rage; she changed her tone. I insisted upon proofs that she was not befooling me; she saw that there was no other way of reassuring me. She refused me nothing but what the tenderest friendship might grant, she granted nothing that might have made her unfaithful, and I had the humiliation to find that the fire kindled by her slightest favours to my senses communicated not the least spark to hers."

It is impossible to keep closer to the truth and to create a romance at the same time than

author of "Recollection
always exalts himself int
teresting personage, Rous
adorn himself with parox.
lence looks well in love, a
cially, when passion glad
which with many minds is
But what was the cause of
and stamping—was it the
beloved? If so, we cou
him, but we doubt wheth
but the fear of being helc
wounded pride, which is
One thing is certain, wha
Madame d'Houdetot was frig
of restraint, or rather his fren
and Rousseau, who was r
advantage of her compassion
caressing marks of friendshi
obtain no more. Madam

accorded the former sufficient to keep alive a passion for herself, a passion that occupied itself in painting Julie and in transfiguring Madame d'Houdetot at one and the same time, and which by a singularity peculiar to Rousseau, fired his head, his imagination, even his senses, without ever taking consistency, which rendered it the more eloquent but less dangerous. The consciousness of this, in all probability, made Madame d'Houdetot more indulgent than she would have been under different circumstances.

"I am wrong," remarks Rousseau, wishing to paint the ardour of his passion, "I am wrong in saying that the love I felt was unshared. To some extent it was. It was equal on both sides, though not reciprocal. We were both drunk with love, but hers was for her lover, mine for her. Our sighs, our delicious tears, mingled together."

There is but one simile which occurred to us on reading this. Our "mind's eye" saw Mr. Buckstone as Chrysos in Mr. Gilbert's charming play of *Pygmalion and Galatea*. Rousseau has before him a marble statue, to be animated but by one man; he knows it, and yet he tries to warm it into life, to make a woman of it. And what a woman would she be if made to respond to his suggestions. Do whatever we may, we can come to but one conclusion, that this half-romantic, half-brutal feeling of Rousseau's did

not deserve the name of love. Such as he painted it, it was a passion rather than a delight. Referring to the *ivresse d'amour* of Madame d'Houdetot and himself, he says, "And still, notwithstanding this perilous intoxication, she never forgot herself for a moment; and as for me, I swear that if at times, led away by my feelings, I tempted her to become faithless, I never really desired her." But this *volens-nolens* platonism, this passion unshared, how coarse does he make it by a constant depicting of his tumultuous feelings! The Minotaur scotched, and rendered powerless for evil, instead of killed by Theseus, and still ironically supplied with his annual quantum of virgins, might have spoken like this. Listen to his narrative of his journeys from Montmorency to Eaubonne, where Madame d'Houdetot lived, to the descriptions of his palpitations, convulsions, of his fits of giddiness on the way at the bare idea of the kiss awaiting him at his arrival. "A sudden glare blinded me, my trembling knees could hardly support me, I was obliged to stop; to sit down, my whole organism was in a state of inconceivable disorder, I felt ready to faint. Aware of the danger, I endeavoured at starting to divert my thoughts, to think of something else. But at the first twenty steps the same recollections and their concomitant incidents assailed me without the possibility of

freeing myself from them. I reached Eau-bonne, weak, exhausted, overcome, scarcely dragging myself along. The moment I beheld her, my strength came back, I felt nothing but the importunity of a vigour inexhaustible and useless." This is what Rousseau calls love. Had we to find a name for it, we should call it a clinical demonstration of sensucus passion. The grotesque or disgust being, thanks to Heaven, the ordinary reward of grossness, behold the strange manner in which he winds up the description of his love for Madame d'Houdetot, which he wants to render interesting. "Such a state, and especially its duration of three months' continual irritation and deprivation, brought on a debility, the consequences of which I could not get rid of for several years and which ended in a lowering of the system that I shall carry with me, or rather that will carry me, to my grave." Such has been the sole amorous pleasure of the man with a temperament the most combustible, but also the most timid which Nature ever produced.

It is difficult to comment upon a love-passion that ends with a hernia, upon a lover who endeavours to enlist our sympathies by this hospital detail? We shall, however, devote a few words to them by-and-by. Let us first of all chronicle the rupture which, according to

Rousseau, was brought about by Madame d'Epinay, whom, with his usual all-engrossing vanity, he accuses of designs upon himself. In the romantic narrative which he has given us of his love for Madame d'Houdetot, her sister-in-law plays the rôle of a rejected and furious rival. He represents himself at *La Chevrette*, strolling and talking with Madame d'Houdetot in the park, in sight of Madame d'Epinay's apartments, "whence, never ceasing to watch us, and fancying herself slighted and defied, she glutted her heart with rage and indignation."

In one of these moments of rage, Madame d'Epinay should have written to Saint-Lambert. Rousseau's pride flattered itself with the idea that Madame d'Epinay was ready to love him, and that she was jealous of his passion for Madame d'Houdetot. The rival of Madame d'Houdetot, to use Rousseau's own misnomer, she who was driven frantic by his passion for another woman, was not Madame d'Epinay, but Thérèse le Vasseur, his domestic and wife in one, she whom he completely overlooked, whom he did not think even capable of jealousy, but who, instigated by her mother, communicated with Madame d'Houdetot's lover. But to accuse Thérèse would not have suited Rousseau's romantic temperament. Continually deceived by his vanity, he prefers accusing every one else

but Thérèse, in order not to reduce his romance to the proportions of a home quarrel, and of such a home.

“A mortal,” says Pindar, “enjoying unalloyed happiness, having sufficient means and glory besides, should not aspire to become a god.” A simple enough counsel to all appearance, but which Rousseau, least of all men, could follow. His literary position was no longer doubtful, his income might have been made amply commensurate with his wants; friends, for all he says to the contrary, were ever ready to assist and receive him, but he must needs aspire to become a god. That this was much the fault of his age, we have already pointed out; sentiment had taken the place of open licentiousness, but everybody made this display, consequently he must do something more than that; he must lead the world to believe that Nature, in creating him, has surpassed herself; that there are at least half a dozen extraordinary dispositions blended into one human being; nay, that he is scarcely a human being at all that he is the greatest effort of his Creator, a semi-, if not a whole, god.

But to play such a divine part, especially where the tender passions are concerned, one must have the omnipotence attributed by the ancients to Zeus in his love-affairs, or else must, in addition to genius, be possessed of beauty,

and, above all, of youth. Louis XII. was right when he said "Love is the slave of young men, the tyrant of old ones." And Jean-Jacques, never very handsome, timid at best, was getting on in years. His genius might have done great things for him, but woman is scarcely ever influenced by genius, or even godlike attributes, in the choice of a lover. We have seen this in the case of Damayanti, we might adduce a dozen more examples, we will take instead the evidence of so consummate an observer as La Bruyère. "A juger de cette femme par sa beauté, sa jeunesse, sa fierté, et ses dédains, il n'y a personne qui doute que ce ne soit un héros qui doive un jour la charmer ; son choix est fait ; c'est un petit monstre qui manque d'esprit." Saint-Lambert was neither a little monster, nor lacking in mind ; he was a gentleman, handsome, agreeable, and well-informed, no doubt intellectually inferior to Rousseau ; but had he been a deformity, devoid of the least spark of wit, he was the man in possession, and, what is more, in possession by right of conquest, not of purchase, which is an important consideration in the affairs of the heart. The general who sells or does not well defend a town, however degraded he may feel himself, has a still greater contempt for the enemy who could not conquer, but was obliged to bribe him. The general who is vanquished

in fair combat, however great he may deem himself, does not feel ashamed to express admiration at the superiority of his foe; on the contrary, his own value rises in proportion to the valour of the antagonist. It is even so with woman, the one who has won her heart, who has driven forth the legitimate possessor by the force of his attractions, imaginary or real, stands well with her, and is scarcely in danger of being dislodged. Rousseau was fully aware of this, "always *l'amour en tiers* between her and me," he says. He prides himself upon Madame d'Houdetot having confessed that she had to invoke the image of Saint-Lambert to remain pure and intact. This flatters his vanity almost as much as if she had yielded. Besides, if we are to believe him, he never solicited, he is more pleased that Madame d'Houdetot should have seen in him the ideal of a lover, than the lover himself. His literary vanity is gratified by the avowal that he expresses love's transports better than any one, without caring much whether he feels or inspires this love. It is all of a piece, the ideal being more valued than the reality. He cannot introduce such a prosaic *Dea ex machina* as Thérèse, and therefore, when the final rupture comes, Madame d'Epinay must take her place. One more instance: Madame d'Houdetot requested

... what would in
those of Julie (*Nouvelle Hé*
have said of these." He
they were written with a vi
of publication. We hav
reader may compute for hi
passion that indites at on
and the most compromi
labours under the fear of
failure, and yearns for the
sacred protestations in case
which grieves less at being r
baffled of its dream of gaini
of its poetic effusions. Fro
sufficiently evident to the re
love for Madame d'Houde
which he himself, perhaps, r
He had been so long pur
tuning her for more than
the goddess at last struck
and exhibited

For Rousseau real, matter-of-fact life existed not. His imagination, always on the wing, always in extremes, created for itself a world peopled either with the virtues of the golden, or the wickedness of the iron, age. He did not live, he dreamt, and these dreams he forged into actions, which, once accomplished, were forgotten with the chimeras that had begotten them, leaving behind ephemeral creations, men and things upon which he persisted in looking as so many unalterable truths. He who had never known virtue, except in distorted visions, stamps these visions on his memory, and from the tumult of stormy, though unacted, passions emanates a high tribute to the serenity produced by a quasi-virtuous life. Because virtue cannot be vice, the Messalina who spouts virtue becomes a Lucrece. Because profligacy sheds tears, it becomes innocence. With him love inspires virtue, and human wisdom in the absence of love can also give virtue. This is a fundamental error. Love does not change the soul. It does not make a Wilberforce of a Henry VIII., nor does human wisdom make a Milton of a Bacon. Love may make a good man better, or a bad man worse, because the feeling takes its good or bad shape from the soul that conceived it. Petrarch and Dante were good and great before they loved, the love only

probably would have the influence of this passion. The proverb which says, "Thou shalt not shrink from crime," Love simply increases our virtues but it does not alter them. We do not believe this. They think they are virtuous and tender, but their tenderness is *à deux*, nothing more. Everywhere generous, disinterested, virtuous, other, the rest of the world is specially the case with the senses play the greatest part. In all call virtue is simply sentiment. It ever works in a limited circle itself that it embraces the doctrine of chivalric love for sensual pretensions in the best propagators knew too well

Sentiment would stand instead of arts, letters, civilisation, it would almost stand instead of food. At least this he preached. Whether he really believed it we have always doubted. To our notion he was a quack, though a quack of genius, the greatest probably that ever found its way among the charlatans. There are such, quacks in good faith. They simply lie to themselves. Mounted on their stilts they imagine to be on their feet, and perform their tricks and juggleries with an incredible artlessness; their vanity is in their blood; they are born actors. Braggarts, extravagant in form like an Indian idol, they would laugh, if perchance they could behold themselves in a mirror, without knowing that it was the glass that reflected them—like the Yankee who addressed uncomplimentary remarks to his image, mistaking it for some one else. Their personality is not ungenerous, but it is clad in the royal garb of Murat, which is said to have attracted danger. They forget one thing—the world cannot feed upon moral sentiments or ideas; to subsist, it requires actions in harmony with these ideas. Our task with Jean-Jacques is finished. Henceforward his life does not belong to our province. When he said he knew men, he made a mistake, he knew the French puppets of the eighteenth century; when he

came in contact with real flesh and blood his knowledge was at fault. Unfortunately these puppets he moved for a certain period at his will; even after he was gone they acted for some little time from the mere vibration of his last tugs at the strings; with the motion that perpetuates itself from self-accumulating power he could not, thanks be to Heaven, endow them.





A MODERN THESEUS.

MIRABEAU.

“But as for Gabriel Honoré, in these strange wayfarings, what has he not seen and tried! . . . For indeed hardly six:ce the Arabian Prophet lay dead to Ali's admiration, was there seen such a Love-hero with the strength of thirty men.”

CARLYLE, *The French Revolution.*

“L'Amour dans l'état social n'a peut-être de raisonnable que sa folie.”—RIVAROL.

“Erringen will der Mensch; er will nicht sicher seyn.”

GOETHE.

THE house that is a-building looks not as the house that is built,” says Mr. Carlyle in the opening lines of his admirable essay on “Mirabeau.” He wishes to imply the difficulty of judging of the probable grandeur or meanness of the fabric with the rubbish and mortar heaps and the scaffolding still surrounding it, and to convey that it is equally difficult to determine the future destiny of man by merely observing him as a child. With the utmost respect due to so great an authority, we venture to differ from him this once. Without implicitly relying on Wordsworth's dictum, “that the child is father

words, a piece of soft wax
imprints, will in his mature
exterior influences. He will
himself, reproduce certain
observable in him in his
lines of his infantine physi-
on themselves in bold outlines.
Campbell tells us that Bro-
all-fours with more energy.
Grangousier is enchanted with
lowing of his new-born son, he
cries for "drink, drink," he fe-
as a *bon convive*, and has him
Gargantua (*Car grand tu as su*
and forthwith orders seven-
hundred and thirteen milch-c-
Therefore, without taking
race whence Mirabeau spr-
had supplied the world uninter-
than five centuries with -

every respect. And, be it remembered that this expression was not inspired by paternal fondness—we have too many contrary proofs—but that it was the result of watching a child, phenomenal then and ever afterwards, both in body and mind. Nothing needs henceforth surprise us from one who enters the world with two molars, “ready cut, who at the age of thirty or more, during an imprisonment of forty-two months in the donjon of Vincennes, grows not only *stouter*, but actually *taller*, whose hair is imbued with such vitality that towards his end, in his last illness, the physician does not feel his pulse, but inquires of the *valet de chambre* of the state of his master’s locks, whether they are curly and frizzy, or lank and powerless.

“This is but a sketch of the *monster*,” as Æschines said of Demosthenes; but we must not be like children and take the outward mask only. Beneath this leonine exterior there beats a nature far less fear-inspiring, a nature rich, ample, generous, “of large desire, truly, but desire towards *all* things, the highest and the lowest,” a nature often gross and vitiated, never mean and grovelling, nay, more frequently cultured and refined, in one word, a nature whose conduct we cannot approve perhaps, but which we love more than many whose conduct is thoroughly unimpeachable, from the world’s

point of view, a nature of which we would be the judge in order to extend to it the prerogative of loving mercy, for it is so very human.

Belonging to a family which for five hundred years had been proverbial for the passionate and excessive originality of its principal members, Mirabeau may be said to be its last sample, on which Nature lavished all her strength, before throwing away the mould. His infancy, his youth, the first years of his manhood, are ardent and stormy; ill understood and worse governed, he is turbulent and refractory, because his passions are suppressed and fostered at the same time; he revolts against the rules laid down for his conduct because he is coerced, not led, into obeying them; he shrinks from submitting to a harsh authority because no pains are taken to soften it; because his superior power is treated without the considerations which prudence ever accords to weakness. Summed up in all, his wrongs at first consist in some youthful freaks prompted by non-reflecting vanity; analysed, they are reduced to some pecuniary extravagances, to some *amourettes* of no consequence whatsoever, to some garrison-quarrels—mind, quarrels, not brawls. Well may his principal biographer ask: "Where is the man who has not committed similar peccadillos?" True enough, but they would have remained hidden—

and justly so—for want of that dazzling light, which, emanating from a great character itself, penetrates its brilliant rays into the inmost recesses of his life, and reveals the errors not thought worthy of notice in Nonentities and Mediocrities.

Mythology tells us that Cælus, terror-stricken by the hideousness of some of his children, chained them down in a subterranean cavern. It tells us farther on of the trick practised by Cybele upon Saturn, in substituting stones for his three sons, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, whom he was bound to devour the moment they were born. We firmly believe that Marquis Mirabeau would have willingly followed this example of stone-swallowing, if his own constitution had permitted him such vagary, certain is it that figuratively he fastened his heir to a chain, from which the latter was never freed until his sire's death. Much valuable time has been spent either in accounting for, or justifying this dislike; nay, some writers have attempted to deny its existence altogether, and all have met with the same fate, they have made confusion worse confounded. For as it is sufficient to know that it did exist, that it can be traced almost from the instant Gabriel Honoré Riquetti, Count de Mirabeau, saw the light at the Castle of Bignon, on the 9th of March, 1749, that with the ex-

To follow Mirabeau step by
odd years of eventful career
worthy of the greatest bio-
grapher, acts dispassionately, "neither
pity of those poor beings nor
wise and chaste because they
inspiring or forming a great
the leniency of indifference
bending austerity of those
prejudices for morality, would
undeserved stigma from under
man of the eighteenth century
mortalise and ennoble the
plished such a task. It has
yet. Of all the memoirs we
name is legion, the three show
best, they are Mr. Carlyle's,
St. Beuve's. The others are
not excluding the gigantic
washing by Monsieur T --

Nickleby would have understood Medea, as Mr. Whalley could understand Loyola, as Mr. Guppy could have understood a Romeo, an Othello, or an Abailard.

That the task is not ours need hardly be said. We can at best but give sufficient evidence in isolated passages to show that Mirabeau was more sinned against than sinning, that at least his first transport of passion, accounted as a crime to him by every Pharisee for the last hundred years, was the prompting of a noble impulse, which elected to face the world's contumely, the father's ire, the risk of his own life, rather than abandon his more than willing accomplice to the seclusion of a convent, to the barbarous treatment of pitiless parents, or to the mean and petty tyranny of a justly incensed, though ignoble, septuagenarian husband.

A few words are indispensable, however, with respect to Gabriel's child- and boyhood, so as to make the reader fully understand, if not the causes, at least the circumstances, through which, at the age of barely sixteen, he found himself entirely friendless, almost cut off from all paternal sympathy, with no one to rely upon save his mother, who, unfortunately, was in a no less trying position than his own, through the machinations of a woman who had usurped her

... perhaps.
nent to the father's inher-
to his son, by seeing him
family famed for its bea-
time immemorial. "Yo
Satan," writes the Marq
Bailli, a little time after
come irretrievably ruttet
application of a lotion, m
chioness to efface the ma-
of small-pox. It had the

The extraordinary facu-
fested themselves early—
vated and trained by his tu-
unmanageable and irregu-
learning. The various ar-
though amiable temper, of
sition to the poor, of his re-
are too numerous to be ins-
the father was charmed b
for we find

prejudices—between the opinion derived from observation and the prejudice inrooted; we find him withhold from a child the indulgence generally granted to a young man; we see him judge when he ought to have waited, punish when he ought to have instructed.

One day the letters are replete with praise, the next brimming over with harsh condemnation of his son. Shortly after this Gabriel is placed under the care of a friend of the family, a retired officer, "who'll make the most of him." But the new tutor is soon discarded, for he is too gentle and too much prepossessed with his pupil; "he is fascinated by, and lauds his memory, which absorbs everything, without wishing to understand that sand is likewise apt to receive all impressions, and that receiving is of little use if not retained," &c. &c., all in depreciating terms.

This animosity, piercing through in every line, bids us prepare for harsh measures, which in a few weeks are realised. Gabriel is transferred to a well-known literary *pension* in Paris, with what views the following extract shows:—
"My rough-hewn son is at last in a place appropriate to his deserts. . . . I have placed him with the Abbé Choquard an austere and rigid disciplinarian, who is little chary of punishments. He has my orders not to spare them.

... his punishments
name, endowed with some
on the banks of a school
inscribed him on the regi
and told him that his own
back, except as the reward

In the teeth of all this,
tion of the Abbé Choque
himself from all his school
of mental and bodily exerci

Almost deprived of the
the systematic avaricious
Gabriel receives some he
already living separately
The correspondence is int
diately stopped. Plans fo
his native country are
give way to a more nat
one. He is placed in a c
manded by the young Ma
model man found in

everything goes well with him for some time—so well, that even the unnatural father is relaxing, and taking steps to obtain his promotion.

But an accident, easily to be foreseen, arouses the parent's ire anew. Gabriel, neither then nor ever afterwards, a gambler from disposition, lost forty louis at play. He moreover contracted some trifling debts, a habit of which, on the other hand, he was frequently guilty—the less pardonable, perhaps, in the father's eyes, because he felt that by the refusal of the necessary pecuniary assistance, he himself was the *causa causarum* of this dereliction. "If we had not so many faults ourselves, we would not take so much pleasure in noticing those of others," shrewdly observes La Rochefoucauld; but this pleasure is changed into silent anger when we feel to have contributed to those mistakes, anger the more deep and injurious, because it becomes incumbent to find a scapegoat, instead of taking ourselves to task. Thus it was with the father, who began threatening his son with the first of a series of *lettres de cachet*, which henceforth were to play such an important rôle in his history—and to avoid which Gabriel secretly left his regiment, and sought refuge with the Marquis de Nivernois, an intimate friend of the family, who, together with Gabriel's brother-in-law, the Count de Saillant, interceded for the young culprit, all

of which added but fuel to the fire. The latter conducted the deserter back to his regiment, where an explanation took place, which did but aggravate matters, seeing that it was simply vehement allegation on one side, and indignant denial on the other of all the facts alleged but one—and that one almost justified by the pressure of circumstances. His superior officer, the Marquis de Lambert, proved the most inveterate of his accusers, for he had against his young subaltern a grievance of a kind which humanity, whether masculine or feminine, is least apt to forgive. Mirabeau had supplanted him in the affections of a pretty girl in the garrison town, and the simple *amourette* was magnified into a case of *rapt*—nay, even into a promise of marriage.

We have now arrived at the first item on the rather long list of love adventures, innocent and otherwise, of which Mirabeau's various biographers have tried to make either too much or too little, but which, we may fairly state, none have understood in their full import, namely, as being part and parcel of the man himself, the outcome if not of his genius, at least of the dawning consciousness of that genius.

That the ethereal and ideal love which the poets have sung, and which we have dubbed platonic, has existed and exists still, we do not

wish to deny, but the known instances are rare. The only example we have been able to adduce is that of Dante for Beatrice; but then it should be remembered that Dante was an exceptional nature, so exceptional that were it not for irrefragable testimony, we could hardly conceive it as having ever existed "in the flesh."

Whether time and the growing spirit of materialism have modified these things we know not, certain it is that modern lovers are content with fewer sonnets and odes, and wish for more conversation and propinquity. This latter desire would then, if we knew it not already, show us that even the purest passion craves something more tangible than its mere expression, that man is composed of matter and spirit, that in time, while the animal has reached completion, the angel begins only. Hence the struggle of all, or nearly all of us, between a future destiny which we divine, and the recollections of our anterior desires, from which we do not become entirely detached; in other words between a carnal and a divine love. One man resolves both in himself alone, another abstains altogether; again a third *fouille le sexe entier* for the satisfaction of these anterior appetites; a fourth idealises them in one woman, who to him is the whole world. Some float undecided between the pleasures of the flesh and those of the spirit, others spiritualise the flesh,

... who the con
those who have not e:
add the errors produc
who live more especia
the heart, or the will, w
whose vocations are d
partnership in which the
dual, we shall beget a g
faults of which Society :

Such a plea for lenienc
for Mirabeau, in whom
absent; the animal, thoug
kind, taking up all the
offences against morality,
are inevitable abuses of N
is an incontrovertible fac
man—by whom we mean t
genius—the first moveme
Nature, the second of his
third and last the voice of
conscie—

offending any one, because these walls are too massive to have let in that third and last voice. For even before the struggle with the world has begun, the preparations for the fray are too manifold to leave this original man either time or inclination to heed those trivial coquetries with which the sham hero thinks it necessary to reconcile his fellow men. This original man knows full well that morality cannot change, that its code is virtually the same for everybody, but he thinks himself absolved from adhering to its petty observances, the same as the King does not stoop to pick up a gold piece, though he would stigmatise the labourer who did not retrace his steps to find the sixpence he had dropped. Still the King is well aware that there is but one virtual law of economy for him and his meanest subject. It is because moral obligations vary not only with the social, but also with the intellectual sphere. This is not our argument, but it is no doubt that of the man of genius, and produces what we call Bohemianism. Mirabeau must be classed among those who feel their genius before having given proof of it to the outer world. Rightly or wrongly he believes in Nature, and above all in his own nature, and clenches his opinion with Göthe's dictum—

“Hätte Gott mich anders gewollt,
So hät' er mich anders gebaut.”

Throughout we must judge him by the standard he has laid down for himself, unless we would risk to misjudge him altogether.

We will now return to his first love-episode, which caused him to lay hands upon a delicious morsel, intended by his angry colonel for private delectation. Poor Gabriel, he cannot help it. Wherever he comes in personal contact, whether with man or woman, atrociously ugly as he is said to be, he not only imposes but seduces. That wild, unconquerable, nay, ungovernable nature, is, at bottom, a good, social, generous heart, and wins without knowing it, without an effort almost, all manner of men, but especially all manner of women, from the pretty archer's daughter at Saintes, to the high-born Madame Monnier, the intellectual Madame de Nehra, the vivacious Jenny Coulon, the untamable Lejay, and a dozen others. In fact, through life he goes from one *Dulcinea* to another, without being particularly careful of managing the transitions. His passion embraces the whole sex. "After all the foibles I have observed in women," writes Sterne, "and the satires I have read against them, I love them still, convinced that the man who has not some sort of affection for the entire sex is incapable of loving one woman as he should." Gabriel might have said the same. Like the author of *Tristram Shandy*, the only woman whom for the

time being he did not sincerely love, was his wife. As for the remainder, they are all beloved, though numerous as the stars in the firmament, the more we look the more we discover, and each one is for the moment his guiding star. He thinks with Jean-Jacques, *L'inconstance et l'amour sont incompatibles ; l'amant qui ne change pas ; il commence ou finit d'aimer*. His first love-affair results in dire trouble. Let the reader imagine the anger of the epicure who, expecting the table spread with a favourite trout, which he has caught after much angling, finds himself on his arrival forestalled in the eating by a robust, hungry glutton, who has gobbled up the dainty, little heeding its delicate flavour that promised so much enjoyment to the other's refined palate. This was the anger and caused the bitterness of Colonel the Marquis de Lambert. So infectious was this wrath, that it gained over to his side the Comte de Saillant, the very man who came down to defend poor Gabriel. The young offender must be taught more carefulness for the future. His imprisonment is resolved upon there and then. He is made the bearer of a letter to the governor of La Rochelle, who arrests and has him conducted to the island of Rhé, where he is placed under the strict supervision of the *Bailli* d'Aulan. This is merely a temporary measure. "If he prove unmanageable there,

we shall pack him off to Surinam," writes the father.

But there, as elsewhere, the young man, whom this father condemns without hearing or seeing, inspires every one who comes near him with an irresistible fascination. We learn this from the Marquis' own letters. "He has bewitched the *Bailli* himself, &c," Mirabeau himself writes to his mother, "My affairs have taken a turn for the better; the *Bailli* d'Aulan, the governor of the island is trying to obtain the commutation of my *lettre de cachet*, and it seems decided that in a short time I shall go to Corsica."

And to Corsica he is sent, in the hopes that a sword thrust or a stray bullet, "if he have the courage to face such perils," shall rid the Marquis of his son.

On his way thither Pierre Buffière—that is the name he still bears by paternal edict—manages to fight a duel—for he has that courage and much more—in which he wounds his antagonist; another crime set down to him, which in fact is no crime at all considering the times.

Arrived on the scene of war, he fights like a lion for a cause with which he has not the slightest sympathy, distinguishes himself in general for his military talents, and as usual manages to gain by his bravery the sympathy of a father, the descendant of a race where cowardice

is unknown. But still he continues to "damn with faint praise." In an incredibly short time, Gabriel writes a history of Corsica, the preface of which draws from the father the unwilling testimony, "that it is full of genius, that it has been dictated by the purest principles, that it is the outcome of a good and steadfast heart."

For some little time after his return he walks in the sunny places of his father's favour; and shortly afterwards we learn from an extract that, "The incrustated muzzle of my son, with all its native and acquired graces, has found the means to make himself acceptable and desired, and almost to be asked in marriage."

This event, which might have had a happy influence on Mirabeau's fate, instead of being the cause of the most wretched and unfortunate complications, shall be dismissed here in a few words as possible, though we may have occasion to revert to it again.

After having driven all other aspirants for her hand out of the field by that peculiar art of his, "irresistible fascination," and—if we are to believe Etienne Dumont, one of his biographers—by some more questionable tactics, Gabriel marries, on the 22nd of June, 1772, Emilie Covet, only daughter of the Marquis de Marignane, an ordinary girl enough, but with great expectations. For the present, however, he is to content him-

position, and that th
besides, and the wedd
short, young Benedict
both ends meet, and in
his father-in-law, who is
thousand francs, provid
beau will forego certai
under the marriage sett
man will do nothing of th
is as hard as the mosaic
miraculous on him," rem
might have finished the
the mere asking is punis
the Jewish lawgiver for st
number two consigns th
child, and all, to the
Manosque; whence he is
time without matrimoni
Castle of If, where as
turned into a friend

deaf as Destiny." Accordingly, Gabriel is removed to the Castle of Joux, among the Jura Mountains, and bidden to stop there at his father's pleasure, with the pittance of fifty pounds a year, "since five hundred was not enough for him."

Ill-fated Mirabeau, and ill-fated Mirabeau's wife, who being deprived of her husband, takes to systematic flirting, ceases soliciting "and begins successful forgetting." Not so, good Mr. Carlyle. As subsequent events shall prove, there was no need for a beginning of successful forgetting. It was done at once. A French philosopher has said, "As it is rare that a woman's heart be altogether devoid of love, if she have none for her husband, she has at least some for another." That other was a pre-nuptial acquaintance, but we are not concerned with this episode, we have undertaken to write of Mirabeau's love-affairs, and no stretch of poetical imagination could include his marriage amongst them.

Not far from the Castle of Joux, where Mirabeau arrived on the 25th of May, 1775, and which he called "an owl's nest, enlivened by a few invalids," is the melancholy little town of Pontarlier. Enjoying a semi-liberty, he was taken thither by the governor of the Castle, the Count de St. Mauris, on the occasion of a fête in

class of men who
Being almost a sept
his own child, marri
Thérèse-Richard de
high legal functionar

When an old man
sèche du bois vert poi
or later, the match th
smouldering heap of
found, and woe to the
good qualities and the
not supply him with th
flames before, in an al
they devastate every r
domestic peace.

These means were e
Marquis de Monnier.
months of this ill-assor

Providence is as great a master of catastrophe and surprise as the most skilful playwright. He manages the entrances and exits with an accuracy the latter would in vain dare emulate. In this instance He produces *jeune premier* Gabriel at the very moment when Sophie begins loudly to complain of her husband's conduct to her mother. After his first introduction, the young man becomes a frequent visitor to the house. The Marquis takes great pleasure in hearing him relate his misfortunes, his exploits in Corsica, nay, even his youthful follies.

" Her father loved me; oft invited me;
 Still questioned me the story of my life
 From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes
 That I have pass'd.
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
 To the very moment he bade me tell it.

* * * * *

This to hear

Would Desdemona seriously incline."

We need not pursue the quotation further. Read "husband" for "father," and "Sophie" for "Desdemona," and we have the first part of the story ready made to hand in Othello's speech to the council.

The germs of passion, dormant until now in the young girl's breast, are suddenly stirred into life in the habitual companionship of a man, who, in default of the charms of beauty, possessed

all the seductive graces of youth and mind added to the interest which misfortune generally inspires. Is it surprising that Sophie's candour and sensibility made her become the prey to a feeling that unconsciously intoxicated her, and grew stronger day by day?

Mirabeau, though much more experienced, was no less exposed than she. "I was very wretched," he writes afterwards, recapitulating the inaugural incidents of his passion—"I was very wretched, and misfortune makes us doubly sensitive; you showed your interest in me, you displayed every charm that could fascinate me—those of a generous soul and an agreeable mind; I wanted some one to console me, and what more delicious consoler than love? Up till then I had but known a commerce of gallantry, which is not love, which is nothing but the lie of love; what was this cool passion compared with that which now began to take hold of me. I have all the qualities and faults of my temperament, if it makes me exceedingly excitable and even impassioned, it also supplies the heart with that fire which feeds my inexpressible desires, it makes me burn with that precious and fatal sensibility which is the source of beautiful imaginings, of profound impressions, of great talents, of great successes, but often also of great errors, and great misfortunes."

Notwithstanding all this, Mirabeau endeavoured to resist the fascination stealing over his heart and senses. He voluntarily exiled himself from Sophie's presence. She reproached him with his absence, and attributed his resistance to some assiduities towards a certain Belinde, which Gabriel, far from denying, excuses on the plea of wishing by their means to escape from a more serious attachment.

He goes farther still. He writes to his father to implore the society of his wife. He writes to the wife herself, to remind her that the divine and human laws by which she is bound to him, should compel her to come and share his lot. In answer to which he receives a few cold lines, mildly insinuating that he is mad. "You denied me the woman who bore my name, and I abandoned myself to my love, whose philtres had intoxicated me, I abandoned myself to my tender feeling, powerless to escape from it," Gabriel writes.

"Powerless to escape." To us these words supply the key to the enigma of Mirabeau's subsequent life, and of his excesses, physical as well as mental. A nature born for great deeds, not necessarily always good deeds, whom the tyranny of a father would doom to inaction if that nature did not revolt. Born for strife, to live in the continuous heat of feverish excitement, this father wants to condemn him to silence, to

peace, to mediocrity, things without reproach in themselves, because they are neither good nor bad, but distasteful to such minds as Mirabeau's, who to a sanitary, neutral existence like this, prefer a chronic malady of ambition and desire, at the risk of never knowing a moment's health again. For after all, human life, in its humdrum, and perhaps in its least dangerous condition, is composed for the body as for the heart and mind of certain regular movements. Every excess imported into this mechanism is either a cause of pleasure or of pain, and pleasure and pain are both fevers of the soul, essentially temporary, for ordinary mortals could not support them for any length of time, any more than bodily fever. To make of life itself one continuous excess, is to be ill always, and this Mirabeau elected to do rather than die of ennui, produced by mental or physical inanition.

Sophie Monnier had been suffering from that same ennui, and elected to throw in her lot with him, hence it was not long before the connexion grew more intimate and indissoluble.

She herself confesses as much in telling Mirabeau of the three short-lived and innocent love-affairs she has had during her marriage. "It is difficult, perhaps, to a woman as young, as *ennuyée*, as pestered as I was, to be told for a long while that she is beloved, without being moved

by it." She appeared to become so more and more each day, until the three lovers that beset her with solicitations, flattered themselves that they had made an impression on her heart. They had merely softened it, leaving it to the last comer to imprint his image upon it for good. A question often debated by Mirabeau's biographers here obtrudes itself. In how far was the Marquis de Monnier cognisant of the previous *liaisons*, and of the present one between his wife and Mirabeau? Are we to class him, as Mirabeau himself has done, among those complacent husbands who wilfully shut their eyes against their own disgrace, provided it be kept concealed from the world? Was he really one of those whom Brantôme and Molière, and the English dramatists of the Restoration after him, have depicted to us in their comic aspect, and whom Society in the nineteenth century persists in treating *au grand sérieux* and dramatically? We must confess we know not. Certain is it, that if he had his suspicions he did not give tongue to them until a later period, when instigated thereto by the Count de St. Mauris, who at one time appears to have had some personal pretensions on Sophie, which were but coldly received by her. The bachelor has been called *le braconnier du mariage*, and though there should be honour amongst thieves, the old poacher, especially if

he have met with rebuff, is apt to peach upon his younger accomplice and to turn pseudo-game-keeper. He may secretly admire the woman's resistance of his snares, inwardly chafing at the defeat all the while as long as all other assailants get tarred with the same brush; but let the game, hitherto pronounced in his own vanity not come-at-able, fall into the trap of a more fortunate successor, that successor becomes at once the object of his bitter hatred, and the prey, formerly immaculate, is stigmatised as a sham, and in league with the thief. Nay, more, suppose him to have conquered, then he has to share the fair one, but if so he prefers to share with the husband, for that is usurpation, and it flatters his vanity; but let some one else enter the field, he dislikes it, for it means equality. "Two thieves cannot live in the same thicket," says Aristophanes. Mirabeau sums up St. Mauris's attempts, his subsequent jealousy and animosity, in a very few words. "I was younger by no less than forty or forty-five years than M. de St. Mauris, and if I was nearly as ugly as he, I was at least a more honest man," or as this phrase would have read then, "more of a gentleman." "The ousted Cicisbeo soon let daylight in upon the relations existing between Madame de Monnier and myself; his angry looks proclaimed his resentment; he soon vented it in epigrams; he

endeavoured to excite the gossip of the town, the zeal of the priests, and the rancour of anonymous letter-writers against Madame de Monnier."

Whatever our own opinions may be with regard to a criminal intimacy between a married man and a married woman, one thing should not be overlooked here. The morals of the time lent themselves to such *liaisons*, and were willing to overlook them provided they were unaccompanied by vulgar scandal. Society had already improved upon Tartuffe's maxim—

" Le mal n'est jamais que dans l'éclat qu'on fait.
Le scandale du monde est ce qui fait l'offense,
Et ce n'est pas pécher que pécher en silence."

It did not even require that one "should sin secretly;" to sin decently was quite sufficient. Once more, we defend neither Madame Monnier nor her lover; but it is certain that they were driven to the desperate measures they soon adopted by the persecution of St. Mauris; and while the guilty pair were branded with the world's scorn, he, much more guilty—for he drove them to the irrevocable step of flight—was regarded as the champion of Society's rights. He had made all retreat impossible by the moral crime which kills by a word; a crime which no human code or institution can prevent, or scarcely can legislate for, the evil being exclusively confined to the higher classes, and defying social

...society of
but frank, the other ;
the one uses his fist or
of insinuation ; the o
the other escapes with

St. Mauris used this
anonymous slander v
Monnier. With Mirab
bluntly to work. On a
ordered him to prepar
Instead of allowing hi
Pontarlier, he gave him
castle, where, with the
Mirabeau, irritated by
against his son, he was
underground cell for hir

Seeing no other outlet
coming home from a b
Monnier, who, strange t
disappears, and is suppo
transit

cannot remain long, however, and is transferred to the house of a trusted friend. But his passion for Sophie soon drives him back to her house, despite the perils he knows full well he is exposed to, despite his knowledge that on foreign ground, and by *himself*, his youth, his birth, and his sword, would procure him the most ample advantages. "I saw all this, but to no purpose . . . the understanding makes one see things; but the dominant passion joins the understanding in action, and has generally more strength than its partner." He remained, sacrificing his welfare to his love, and we are much inclined to give him an applauding answer when he asks, "Whether such faults may not rightly claim the pity and indulgence of sympathetic hearts?"

Behold Mirabeau, then, hidden in Pontarlier, tracked from place to place; while no pains are spared to excite the ire of the Marquis de Monnier against his erring wife and the object of her passion.

Michelet, in setting up Love as the foundation of our social and political institutions, is undoubtedly right. Still, there is something which precedes the Love he speaks of, and that is Nature. He is in error when he thinks that the Love which is the foundation of mankind, is the same as that on which the family institution is based. Still, we will grant him that Nature's

... and area
carried out by Socie
order to effect this, Lo
with civilisation. In
stronger of the two s
at times to co-operat
supremacy, and with i
lists. Love distinctly
my origin nor my sanc
from Nature alone I ele
tion, like the horse in
of marriage as an auxilia
which she but partially
marriage, after contributi
to be dislodged, and imp
both ally and vanquish
hitherto foes, now leagu
Civilisation makes a sec
Hymen now and then, to
and of these moments Lov
to make a ...

out restraint. No one more willing than Sophie Monnier, who in vain had been beating her poor wings against the hymeneal cage. She was not to escape easily, however. Marriage is the authority in power, and has many flunkeys and toadies, while Civilisation dare not openly proclaim her hostility.

In that *combat à outrance*, to which we have just now likened the struggle between marriage and love, there is every now and then a lull, sometimes developing into a truce of shorter or longer duration, according to the temperament of the intervening parties, in the shape of a fresh batch of couples, who aspire to teach the belligerents to live at peace for ever afterwards. The ceremony is generally accompanied by a *Te Deum*, in which the newly-married implore the blessings of Heaven, because they know that the promise to love each other to the end is a very bold undertaking. There are also witnesses to these contracts, whose interest it is to see them faithfully performed, if they would not be accused of having lent their countenance to underhand dealings, and to the abetting of wilful perjury. As the reader will perceive, it is not unlike a game at politics. These witnesses are generally swayed by private motives; they are the parents glad to see their children *settled*—save the word—as they call it, and whom it would thus ill become to disturb

wanted to be under
protection from being
personal *surveillance*.
of her husband's now
of the sneers of her dom
in the home of her par
the 25th of January,
Gabriel's first disappear
will remember, he was s
Pontarlier.

Thither her lover follo
state of mind when one
... "I know that it l
this moment I had made
Madame de Monnier; in
—"the hour, the place and
well chosen. We had n
us; I could not doubt for
most closely

As we have already hinted in the beginning of these pages, and as we shall prove hereafter, nothing was further from Mirabeau's mind than an elopement. If the reader should ask what his intentions were, we should have to confess, judging from his actions, that he did not know himself.

Hardly had he set foot in Dijon, when he was arrested through the intermediary of Madame de Ruffey (Sophie's mother), who denounced him to the grand-provost. The French have not, and never had, the knack of "washing their conjugal linen at home." They have never profited by the advice Napoleon gave them. Mirabeau, no doubt the injured party in this instance, still endeavoured to prevent a public scandal. All his efforts were bent on keeping the name of Madame de Monnier out of the question, or still further embroiling her with her husband, and he to some extent succeeded, aided by the good will of the grand-provost, who kept his name a secret, left him free on parole, and even tried to soften Madame de Ruffey, who drove her daughter to despair.

Observes the authoress of *Daniel Deronda*: "Some minds are wonderful for keeping up a facility of saying"—let us add, and doing—"things which will drive people exactly in a direction contrary to the one in which they wish

and adjusting her differences, she as good her off from all com watch her, treated her while forgetting that t duce the most unwishe all, she resolved to Tired of all this perse Mirabeau Sophie retired avoid the severities of self up to M. de Change of Dijon. Again the ga a friend, who solicited a the same disheartening r was implacable; another selected for him. In tl and received back his par and escaped once more t time under the title of He took

lover, Lieutenant Brianson, in flight on their own account. The Marquis has set the two best bloodhounds of the Paris police at his son's heels, and unmuzzling them cries, "Hunt!" "Man," says Mr. Carlyle,* "being a venatory creature, and the chase perennially interesting to him, we have thought it might be good to present certain broken glimpses of the man-hunt through the south-west of France; of which, by a singular felicity, some narrative exists, in the shape of official reports, very ill-spelt and otherwise curious, written down sectionally by the chief slot-hound himself, for transmittal to the chief huntsman, eyeing it intently from the distance. It is not every day that there is such game afield as a Gabriel Honoré, such a huntsman tallyhoing in the distance as old Marquis Mirabeau; or that you have a hound who can, in never so bad spelling, *tell* you what his notions of the business are—

"On arriving at Dijon, I went to see Madame la Présidente de Ruffey, to gather new information from her. Madame informed me that there was in the town a certain Chevalier de Macon, a half-pay officer, who was the Sieur de Mirabeau's friend, his companion and confidant, and that if any one could get acquainted with *him*. . . . The Sieur Brugnière (one of the detectives) went, therefore, to lodge at this Macon's inn; finds means to get acquainted with him, affecting the same tastes, following him to fencing-rooms, billiard-tables, and other such places. * * * * *

* *Mirabeau: Critical and Miscellaneous Essays.* Vol. v.

are gone; we hasten hither and
them now. Hope fallacious:

“However, what helps Br
the Sieur Mirabeau and his
smugglers, bought yet other
hunting-knife with a secret
at Geneva. They take remot
France. Following on foot t
Lyons, where they seem to
methods, accompanied with i
town, we lost all track of the
ful. At length we have com
confidential servant of Madam
along with Brianson, who I
Mirabeau signified to Saint-
Lorgne, in Provence, that Bri
as far as Nice, where he would
month there.

“Following this trace of M.
on the Rhone at Lyons, we c
took post-horses, having sent
town; he had another pair c
and then, being well hidden
Avignon, put letters in the pos
evening. But now at that ti
Beaucaire Fair, and this cabrio
it was impossible for us to trac

the report by—"Monsieur, we have done all that the human mind can imagine, and this where the heats are so excessive; and we are worn out with fatigue, and our limbs swollen."

Mirabeau had given his pursuers the "slip," but not, as has so often and wrongly been stated, to rejoin Madame Monnier, but rather to free himself from the connexion. After reading carefully Monsieur de Montigny's faithful narrative of the circumstances, and allowing for his natural wish to screen the memory of his father—for Mirabeau was such—as much as possible, we can come to but one conclusion, that if there was a seducer at all in the case it was Sophie, and not Gabriel.

*"Desire had trimmed the sails, and Circumstance
Brought but the breeze to fill them."*

For, as we know, Madame Monnier, previous to Mirabeau's acquaintance, had had three admirers already; and whether their admiration was purely platonic or not, it would have drifted into something more impassioned, had they pleased the object of their admiration half as much as the man with whom her memory is now so indissolubly and immortally connected. From her genuine letters, it would seem that Madame Monnier was not at all a poetic personage, simply a woman of ardent passions, anxious to escape the hateful ties that bound

her to a morose, avaricious, and jealous septuagenarian; the extreme sensibility of her organisation would have driven her to some false step if Mirabeau had never appeared upon the scene. His peculiar position no doubt aggravated, accelerated, and divulged the scandal, which but for him might have remained *sub rosa*. The difficulty to Mirabeau in this instance was to inflict rejection, or even the suspicion of hesitation and doubt, on a misguided but ardent and suffering woman, who had staked the whole of her existence in her extravagant admiration for him. It was this knowledge that induced him not to abandon the woman whom he had compromised; so when, on the night of the 23rd of August, 1776, Madame Monnier scaled the garden-wall of her home, and joined her lover at Verrières, he felt bound to take her under his protection, rather than expose her to the cruel treatment this step would have entailed at her husband's hands. They fled to Holland.

We have more than once expressed our opinion of the morality of society which sees no crime in yoking—

“A sapling with a falling oak,”

in the marriage of convenience, for an establishment, for diplomatic reasons, which cares more for the priest's blessing, for the certificate, than for the feelings of a young girl—for it is gene-

rally the woman who is sacrificed—who is as much bought and sold as if she were a chattel or an animal. Be it so, then ; but let Society do away with the cant which censures in the woman what it would praise in the faithful dog, which condemns the one for running away from a tyrannical and uncongenial master, and admires the canine instinct that seeks love. Until then, in the words of Diderot—*Nous parlerons contre les lois insensées jusqu'à ce qu'on les réforme, et en attendant nous nous y soumettrons aveuglément.* We are glad, however, to have an ally in so valuable an authority as Mr. Carlyle, who, commenting upon the comments of M. de Montigny, remarks : “Crime, for ever lamentable,” ejaculates the *Fils Adoptif*, “of which the world has so spoken, and must for ever speak.” There are, indeed, many things easy to be spoken of it, and also some things not easy to be spoken. Might not the first grand criminal and sinner in this business be legal President Monnier, the distracted, spleen-stricken, nervous-stricken old man, liable to trial, with non-acquittal or difficult acquittal, at the great bar of Nature herself? And then the second sinner in it? and the third? and the fourth? “He that is *without* sin among you——!” One thing, therefore, the present reviewer will speak, in the words of old Samuel Johnson, “My dear *Fils Adoptif*, my dear brethren

of mankind, endeavour to clear your mind of cant ! It is positively the prime necessity for all men, and all women and children in these days, who would have their souls live, were it even feebly, and not die of the detestable asphyxia, as in carbonic vapour, the more horrible for breathing of, the more clean it looks." As the dog, who prefers the gutter with the street-arab he loves to the luxurious home of the master whom he hates, so Sophie fled with Gabriel. As the master who has legally purchased the dog, not caring a jot, simply regarding him as so much property, President Monnier moved heaven and earth to get back his wife. He does in our opinion, not look well in the business, and this, apart from the objections we have to the man who, taking advantage of the law, coerces his wife to return to him when she has left voluntarily, often gladly ; this, apart from our objections to some of the unwritten as well as written laws, which place the moral, if not the legal, power entirely in the husband's hands.

"How will you alter this?" asks the sophist ; "you are correct in your objections against this tyranny of the husband, but in a well-regulated household, there must be one who is sacrificed, and it is but right that it should be the woman. To condone such injustice, a sophism and a principle are advanced ; this is the sophism.

“A code,” say the sophists, “is no doubt the most general expression of our morals, but it happens more frequently still that these morals contradict the code. There are more existences and actions without, than within, the strict pale of the law. The law, in fact, resembles the bar across the road significant of *NO THOROUGHFARE*. Do the announcement and bar arrest the passer-by? Not at all. One creeps under, a second leaps over, a third pushes the obstruction a little to the right, a fourth a little to the left, the greatest number succeeds in squeezing through, without even displacing the beam and trestles. Thus it is with woman. The conjugal chart proclaims the obedience of the wife, but is there one who obeys her husband? In principle no doubt, in appearance always; but in reality? Whosoever claims for woman the alteration in the moral laws, because by them she is accounted the inferior, and whosoever succeeds in altering those laws in her favour, injures her by eliminating from her life one of her greatest joys. What greater tribute, in fact, to her finesse, or a livelier source of pleasure to her, than to be called a slave, whilst throughout she feels herself the dominant power. Domination of the spirit over matter, if you will, an undefinable, impalpable domination, but for this very reason more to be envied. Our rude masculine sway is based on

heavy and massive foundations, but the power of woman is ethereal almost, having no fixed abode, being everywhere and nowhere. It makes itself felt by a look, by a movement, by an intonation, by a nameless something, probably the most delicate in the human organism. Proclaim woman the equal of man, the cause for struggle ceases, and with it the gratification attendant upon conquest, she will then become as much bored as a legitimate queen. That which makes woman so charming a creature is her paradoxical position. She is supposed incapable of anything, yet she does everything, and the fable of the "Lion in Love," is the greatest libel upon her all-embracing power. To aver that she should have cut the lion's claws, blunted his teeth! No, no, she is not so great a fool. To please her the animal must be terrific and roar, his mane must stand on end, shaking now and then like the very trees in the wind-swept forest; his dreadful jaw must gape with the craving of murderous appetite. If he were tame and lamb-like, where would be the achievement of passing her smooth and delicate fingers through the mane, of playing with the claws, of calling him with her sweet voice and making him lie down beside her like a pet spaniel, anxious to be fondled. Brave lion, hugging himself with the notion that he is the king of beasts, while the feeblest of all creatures,

woman, is moulding him to her will. A woman need not even be beloved by her husband, in order to govern him. It is quite sufficient that she should discover the qualities of which he is most proud, in other words, his weak side, which discovery is not difficult to make, for, as a rule, a man has more than one. In this way, the equilibrium is restored, and the apparent masters are in reality led by the skilful ruses, artful flatteries, and timely bestowed caresses.

We will not pretend to make light of this argument ; on the contrary, we will admit its correctness. It is unfortunately too true that when a woman's will is as strong as that of the man who wants to govern her, half her strength must be concealment, the other half not assertion but coaxing. Yes, the clever manœuvres, the well-timed caresses, contribute in regaining for woman much of that empire of which man has robbed her ; but were it for no other reason than this we should hasten to grant her part of her moral freedom immediately. What, after all, is the empire obtained by her in this way but a lie, a trafficking with, and a prostitution of, her affections ? Under such a dominion everything becomes false in certain women ; the tone of the voice, the tear, anger itself. Encouraged by the success of this hourly deception they at last discard the commonest dictates of honesty, league

themselves with the tradesman who supplies them, make accomplices of their servants in order to pilfer and satisfy their coquetry at the cost of their probity. God has created woman keen and tactical, man renders her wily and conspiring; God has created her ingratiating; he makes her cringing and insidious; woman such as Society admires her is a deformed being. Let us therefore make an end of laws that violate morals, and of morals that corrupt laws. Let us give woman her liberty, and liberty being truth, it will be emancipating man at the same time. Servitude creates two slaves. Ask the warder whether he is not almost as much a prisoner as the one he guards. The world makes the husband pay for his omnipotence by a prejudice tenfold as hard as the subjection of the wife.

We have but to look at daily facts, scarcely to be explained by reason. Every treachery makes the person of the betrayed an object of public sympathy and compassion. We pity Othello, we weep with King Lear; but if we do not laugh outright at Arnolphe, Lord Touchwood, Manly, and a hundred others, it is because we are too well-bred; still we smile at them in secret. Let anyone deny the truth of the following epigram, heartless as it may sound:—*L'adultère est une faillite, à cette différence près, que c'est CELUI à qui l'on fait banqueroute qui est DESHONORÉ.* Mark

well, the man is meant by this, for both pronoun and verb are placed in the masculine. This betrayal may be more than death to a man, his heart may bleed past quenching, but we smile for all that. The crime of the guilty one becomes the disgrace of the innocent; but no matter, we smile. In France and elsewhere on the Continent he may still resort to the desperate and unauthorised remedy of killing or being killed. In England his sole redress is the law, with the additional privilege of changing the smile of his private circle into the jeer and sneer of the million.

Is this the wickedness of humanity, gloating over the distress of its fellow beings? We think not, inasmuch as no other misfortune excites our raillery. Whence, then, comes this cruel inconsistency? From a feeling of poetical justice, revolting, in spite of ourselves, as it were, at the injustice of these laws that invest man with marital absolutism. He has claimed and received from the law almost unlimited moral power. He may control his wife's actions at every step; but if she succeed in eluding his vigilance, he lays himself open to the ridicule attached to the outwitted gaoler. No one blames the prisoner for escaping from his dungeon, though if caught again he has to suffer. The stronger the captive is guarded, the mor :

piquant becomes the escape. The gaoler may nail down the windows, bolt the doors; but if his charge succeeds in finding egress, the comic element enters, and the continuity of the tragic is broken. Moral: Do you wish the play to be homogeneous, import the light element yourself; if not, it will introduce itself at inopportune moments and change your sorrow into burlesque. There is only one kind of liberty, the liberty of equality under all circumstances. That equality President Monnier never granted to his wife. He bought her as a piece of furniture, and then felt surprised that she was a woman. He was like the ape who gained possession of a violin, placed it by his side, content to look. One day he saw and heard a player drawing the sweetest sounds from a like instrument, thought it was not like his, and watched. Convinced that it was like, he tried himself, and produced nothing but discord. His opinion wavered again. But the artist took up the ape's instrument, and the music was just as sweet. Then the ape got wroth, broke his violin, and tried to throttle the player, who caught up the broken instrument, more sympathetic than his own, fled with it to Amsterdam, whither ape Monnier sends his emissaries in due time. Meanwhile, Mirabeau and his beautiful sad-heroic Sophie led a precarious, but not unromantic life, in the capital of Holland.

Not a smooth life, perhaps, many illusions perishing, but being replaced by something more stable than mere illusion, and more likely to last. Gabriel losing much of his original impetuosity; for if the swift and the lame are to walk together, the pace must necessarily be that of the lame, unless the former elect not to let the latter walk at all, and carry him on his shoulders. He doing hack-work for the Dutch booksellers, translating Watson's *Philip the Second*, she sewing and scouring beside him, not unhappy, for a pledge of their love is expected. "It was like a little Paphos islet in the middle of blackness; the very danger and despair that environed it made the islet blissful; even as in virtue of death, life to the fretfullest becomes tolerable, becomes sweet, death being so nigh." They knew that their happiness would at best be short-lived, that the sleuth-hounds were on their track, that the next hour might irrevocably separate them. In this way eight months rolled by, maternal and paternal expectant joy longing for the morrow, insecurity and fear of arrest, dreading the revolving of the hours still hoping that they may bring the news of persecution having ceased.

"What name doth Joy most borrow
When life is fair?"

'To-morrow.'

What name doth best fit Sorrow,
In young despair?"

'To-morrow.'

To-morrow came, and with it the fiat endorsed by the King—"What men hath not joined, let men tear asunder." Inspector Brugnière, the same who complained of his feet being swollen, obliged therefore to give up the chase, has recovered, and found his way to Amsterdam, provided with sealed parchments and orders to conduct the fugitives to France. We have changed that at least; thanks be to Heaven, our morality depends upon itself for reward and punishment, the law does not drive or compel it to be chaste. We are no longer like the child that looked for its butterfly, and found it settled on its head. Well had it been for Louis XVI. to leave the breach of morality on Mirabeau's head, it might have saved his own. However, the decree has gone forth. Gabriel Honoré shall be carried this way, Sophie that, the mother and father of the unborn child shall behold each other no longer. Their little Paphos islet is swamped, submerged by the deluge of a father's and husband's anger. In separate postchaises the lovers are borne away to France, means of communication are still provided on the road, for, if not, Sophie will kill herself, having poison hidden in her corset, which Brugnière charitably takes away, thinking that the old President will prefer a living faithless wife to a dead submissive one. But no, she is not to join her husband, an asylum has been prepared

for her in a convent, "there to await what Fate, very minatory at this time, will see good to bring."

As for Gabriel Honoré, he shall be relegated to the donjon of Vincennes, there to reflect upon his evil ways. Which he does, in a manner peculiar to himself, writing a Fielding-like novel, *My Conversion*; taking the Bible to witness his repentance, and preparing his justification to Heaven by copious extracts of its most amative passages, which he collects in a *Biblion Eroticon*. Nor is Sophie forgotten. Love-letters, sufficient to fill two closely printed volumes pass between them, which it were best not to quote, "good love-letters of their kind, notwithstanding," says Carlyle. Much depends upon individual opinions, to us they appear to have been written with the intention of fulfilling the first part of Chamfort's famous maxim *L'amour est l'échange de deux fantaisies et le* —: a maxim which Mirabeau never fails to execute in its integrity, whenever and wherever the opportunity occurs. Sophie not being available, he consoles himself with the frail wife of the governor and a powerful Court lady, a princess, it is said, who eventually manages, with others, to intercede for him and to obtain his liberation, after forty-two months of incarceration, likely to have killed any other man than this one, who, like a giant refreshed, emerges *stouter and taller* from his confinement.

To rush into Sophie's arms, the reader would think. Not at all, not even to see her, at least, not for some time. There was other work in store for him. He stands alone as it were in the wide world. Home he has none. The father's, the wife's are closed to him, nor will the world leave him in peace. Lawsuits by the Monnier and Marignane families, suits for divorce, all of which are so many stimulants to Herculean energy, the world looking on with astonishment at this modern Titan, who is not only one of the ablest but the most impudent man alive.

He even gains the reluctant approval of his father, not for long, however. His second lawsuit, divorcing him from his wife, and consequently from her expectations, the old man eyes his son askance again, and obliges him to turn out Ishmael-like as before. "Whatsoever of wit or strength he has within himself will stand true to him, on that he can count—unfortunately on almost nothing but that."

* * * *

Meanwhile there has been an interview with Sophie Monnier, who is now, though not then, a free woman. Mirabeau's eloquence has emancipated her from a hateful marriage. He also has got rid of his wife, and in the romantic order of things we should expect that these two should

come together, beget many children, and "live happily ever afterwards." Alas for the romantic order of things, which, paradoxical as it may sound, can only be worked out by a very unromantic order of beings. Jealousy with the latter means love, the wish to be beloved in return, to have the cause of misunderstanding cleared, to fall into each other's arms, to forgive, to forget. Not so with Mirabeau and Sophie, at any rate not with him. When these two met, some eighteen months after Gabriel had been liberated, there were upbraidings instead of fond embracings, each knew that they had drifted asunder, the sole tie that might have bound them together, their child, was dead. There was no attempt to rekindle the former flame, oratorical reproaches on one side, less eloquent but equally vehement reproaches on the other, and so they parted never to meet again here below. They felt absolved from all further fidelity, from all prolonged constancy. In fact, to have required such a thing from Mirabeau, roaming through the world, would have been like asking it from Hercules, from Jupiter himself, or any of the other *volages* heroes of antiquity. Sophie still in her convent at Gien, from personal choice, or newly-sprung attraction, ended by openly authorising herself (we say this with regret) to follow the example of her former

lover. At last she conceived a true and ardent passion for a certain M. de Poterat, a captain of cavalry, a man of about her own age, and was on the point of being united to him when he died of lung disease. Resolved not to outlive him, on the day following his death, the 8th of September, 1789, she was found on the sofa of the convent-parlour of *St. Claires* at Gien, suffocated in the dramatic suicidal French fashion, with a brazier of charcoal by her side. When Mirabeau heard of her death—it was communicated to him by a friend of Dr. Ysabeau, who had attended her throughout her stay in the latter town—he absented himself for three days from the sittings of the National Assembly. For this sad termination of a now world-famous love-story Mirabeau has often and most unjustly been blamed, though he in no way deserves the blame, it was not for him, but for M. de Poterat, that Sophie killed herself. To lose a dreamt-of happiness, to renounce a cherished future, causes a more poignant suffering than that caused by the ruin of a happiness already tasted; however complete the latter may have been, hope is better than recollection, and it was from this cause that Sophie, who outlived the wrenching asunder in Holland, would not outlive the blighted prospect of a union with one who was in no way equal to Mirabeau, but around whom her ardent

imagination had thrown a halo of perfection which made existence impossible without him.

“When affection’s onward course is stopped,
It swells to agony the aching heart,
And, wildly bursting all impediment,
Displays its strength in desolation.”

A great sorrow makes of the soul a vast desert, where nought is heard but the voice of God, exhorting to calmness and resignation. The vouchsafed consolation is misconstrued by despair into counsel to lie down and die.

To Mirabeau, life from the moment he has left his prison, and for the next few years, is a troublous matter. It is an existence of shifts and expedients, each day more than sufficient for itself. From place to place he wanders, now into Holland, then into France and Germany and England, intimate with many men, with many women, *toujours un peu marié*, the connexion dependent on mutual satisfaction. But, whatsoever the world may think, these latter are all women whom, under different conditions, any man might feel proud to call wife. Notably one, a beautiful, accomplished young girl of Dutch extraction, who exercised, or at least endeavoured to exercise, a kind influence on his chequered life. Of the female called “unfortunate” he strictly held aloof, to her he had an unconquerable aversion, for, as Dumont says,

“his morals were vicious, not degraded, he wanted attachment and sensibility; he, Mirabeau himself, has told me, that he could never look without repugnance on the public courtesan;” as for his other offences against Society, they were inseparable from the man’s nature, he was made to inspire passions as well as to be inspired by them; he paid as it were the penalty of Nature, to which she, “in her just self-vindication, can sometimes doom men.” Of this connexion with the Dutch girl, M. de Montigny scarcely makes any mention, a few lines is all he devotes to it, and yet it was well worthy of better treatment. It was reserved for a personal friend of the *Fils Adoptif* to unearth these interesting details, and we almost verbally transcribe his narrative:—

“One day that he (the *Fils Adoptif*) brought out for my inspection a series of miniatures painted on boxes, I was particularly struck with the charming features of a woman who appeared to be between the age of eighteen and twenty, and whose physiognomy proclaimed at once a great deal of mind, much delicacy, and much sweetness. I asked him the name of this graceful person. He answered, ‘It is Madame de Nehra. Of all the women who have loved Mirabeau, or whom Mirabeau has loved, she was the most absolutely devoted to him; an orphan

and unmarried she attached herself to him without having to violate any anterior engagement. For the space of five years she lived but for him ; all Mirabeau's friends who have seen her devote herself so entirely to the interests, the happiness, and the glory of the man she loved, have spoken of her with esteem and respect. By dint of wounding her pride, the incurable frailness (*fragilité*) of Mirabeau ended in driving her away from his side ; but though she left she never ceased to love him. She survived him by a great many years, and to my knowledge never formed any other attachment. Though I was not her son, she was the tenderest mother to me in my early childhood, and her memory will ever be most dear to me. On her connexion with Mirabeau she has written two unpublished notices, of which I have quoted but a few short extracts in my work. The whole appearing to me of a nature to produce perhaps an impression more favourable to her than to Mirabeau, I could not make up my mind to publish it myself in its entirety. Nevertheless it is curious, and I should not be sorry to see it published. If you will undertake it, I'll willingly entrust it to you." "I read these fragments," says M. Louis de Lomenie, "they interested me, and I promised myself to publish them one day." To the fulfilment of this

promise we are indebted for most of the following details.

Henrietta-Amelie de Nehra was the illegitimate daughter of Onno Zvier van Haren, a prominent figure among the political and literary celebrities of the Holland of the eighteenth century, best known to posterity, however, by his epic poem, *The Beggars*, in which he sang the heroic doings of those of his countrymen who had contributed to the emancipation from Spanish rule. When the girl was fourteen the father died, and though up to his death she had received a most careful education, he was unable to leave her more than a modest annuity, having had to provide for his other children born in wedlock. The young orphan, not having the right to bear the name of him to whom she owed her birth, took that of de Nehra, an anagram of van Haren, and through circumstances which have not come to light, was sent to France, where she took up her abode in a convent near Paris as a *pensionnaire libre*—i.e., under no engagement to take the veil. It was in this convent that she made the acquaintance of Mirabeau in the beginning of 1784, when she had barely reached the age of nineteen, "being," says M. de Lomenie, "of the most ravishing beauty, freshness, and grace, to judge from the portrait already spoken of above." She herself

gives an account of her first meeting with Mirabeau.

"In the beginning of 1784, M. de Mirabeau, whom I did not know then, received a letter from a lady, an old friend, whom he had not seen for fifteen years, and who invited him to pay her a visit on an estate which she had inherited from her sister. Mirabeau's ardent imagination becomes excited, he recalls to mind some agreeable reminiscences, answers with enthusiasm, and after one or two letters from both sides, orders post-horses, and at a time when his presence is most wanted in Paris, he rushes away to shut himself up for a month's *tête-à-tête* with the Marchioness de Saint-O—.

"I had known this lady for some years; I had been fortunate enough to render her some important service; and having taken it into her head to follow her friend to Paris, she considered that I was the person most fit to shelter her, and to allay the displeasure of her husband, if he should take amiss his not having been consulted upon this fitting.

"One fine morning the Marchioness arrived at my quarters while I happened to be out, having gone to lunch with a lady friend. She installed herself in my apartment, and I was most surprised on my return at finding her established there. I was only for a few days longer at the *Petites Orphelines*—my apartment was being prepared at the convent of *La Conception*; and it was utterly impossible for me to lodge Madame de Saint-O—, her maid, and her lacquey, especially in a community whence the men had to retire at nine o'clock. Madame de Saint-O— had alighted at once from her carriage, accompanied only by her servants. M. de Mirabeau having wished to make some *toilette* before being presented to me, she wrote a note to inform him that I had excused myself from lodging her. I believe that my excuses had piqued her. As for Mirabeau, he has confessed to me since that my refusal had put him into a horrible rage. Thus the first sentiment I inspired him with was that of anger.

"After dinner on the same day I saw him for the first time. His features displeased me to an incredible degree; I started back with terror. I have remarked since that I am not the only one who, after having received this unfavourable im-

pression, have not only grown accustomed to his face, but ended in considering that his features suited the turn of his mind. His physiognomy was expressive, his mouth charming, and his smile full of grace.

"We argued a long time; he displayed all his eloquence to induce me to lodge his lady, and as I held firm, the only thing he gained by it was that I should remain with her in a furnished apartment until the arrival of the husband, to whom I wrote, I know not what, to induce him to join us in Paris, or to leave us his wife.

"Mirabeau passed his days with us. He was very charming. We did not always talk trifles; our conversations turned on literature and ethics. We were not up to his level, but he descended to ours; his ideas always met mine half-way. I listened to him with eagerness; he expressed what I felt, what I thought, what I should have said, if I had had the same facility of expression, and he perceived well enough that I understood him—he divined, as it were, what I had not the talent to enunciate. We also spoke sometimes of a great man who had been my benefactor.* I wept for his loss, and Mirabeau, who had been well acquainted with him, mingled his tears with those I shed to his memory (*dont j'arrosais sa tombe*), and appreciated my sentiments. In proportion to M. de Mirabeau's friendship revealing itself, that of Madame de Saint-O—grew cooler. He had never breathed a word of love to me, and I should have been terribly offended at it. I believed him under an engagement to my friend, and all pretension on his heart would have appeared a crime to me. I have many failings, but I never had the barbarous vanity to entice another woman's lover. I know that our sex makes itself a cruel game, sometimes a triumph of causing an infidelity; this species of coquetry appears to me the most contemptible of all. I was not born without passions, I know what jealousy is, the most cruel of all tortures; I would prefer people plunging a dagger into my breast than making me feel its effects. My friend's lover was sacred to me; he was my brother, my friend; any other sentiment than that of friend-

* A reference to Onno Zwier van Haren, Madame de Nehra's father, whose acquaintance Mirabeau had made during his stay in Holland in 1776.

ship I should have deemed a sacrilege. What I state here is so true, that after his *liaison* with Madame de Saint-O—— was broken off, and notwithstanding the ardent passion he had for me for so long a time, I was unable to alter the nature of my attachment. I have loved him more tenderly since then, I preferred him to all other men, but I was not in love. I am, therefore, more worthy of credit in doing justice to the excellent qualities of his heart, than if blinded by passion. The coolness of Madame de Saint-O—— surprised me; I did not fathom its causes, only I noticed that she no longer met me save with repugnance, and without reproaching her, without asking her for explanations, I caught at the pretext of the worry of change of convent to quit a house where I perceived myself becoming unwelcome. I did not see Madame de Saint-O—— again, save on rare occasions, and I ceased to see her altogether when she began to act more than strangely towards M. de Mirabeau. She soon forgot the services I had rendered her, and concocted a thousand petty annoyances. We might have revenged ourselves; we abstained, nevertheless. M. de Mirabeau has never ruined a woman from mere levity of heart, not even those of whom he had reason to complain; he has compromised some, because he was impassioned, because he could ill conceal what he felt; but everything which men à *bonnes fortunes* call *rouerie* was entirely foreign to his character."

In this way three months elapse, during which Mirabeau is occupied in refuting libels published upon him anent his appeal in the lawsuit with his wife. He sees Madame de Nehra every day, passing four or five hours at the time conversing with her through the grated trapdoor in the convent. One day, after a stormy interview with the *Garde des Sceaux*, M. de Miromesnil, he makes up his mind to leave France, and proposes to Madame de Nehra to accompany him. Though the project seems to her nothing short

of madness, he, as usual, pleads so eloquently, that the following morning she starts with him.

“I never repented it. It was at the end of this journey that our intimacy commenced. It was then that I perceived how the constant refusal to attach myself to him made him miserable; I flattered myself that I was the woman most suitable to his heart, I hoped to calm sometimes the aberrations of a too fervent imagination, but what decided me above all was his misfortunes. At that time everything combined against him—relations, friends, fortune, all had abandoned him; I alone remained, and I wanted to stand him in lieu of everything. Hence I sacrificed to him every project that was incompatible with our relation; I sacrificed to him a tranquil life to associate myself with the perils that environed his career. From that moment I took an oath to exist but for him, to follow him everywhere, to expose myself to everything in order to be of service to him in good or evil fortune. I leave it to Mirabeau’s friends to judge whether I have faithfully fulfilled this sacred engagement.”

Then follows an account of the journeys they took together, how she assisted him, against his will, to smuggle into France copies of a memoir by Mirabeau, prohibited by the Government, the heroic sacrifice of the woman shining throughout the simple narrative; how she strove to curtail his expenses, to refrain from nothing which might make him a happy and contented man.

“At this period I began my functions as a housewife; I had the horses sold, I induced Mirabeau to give up his carriage, to keep but one servant to attend upon us. I was not above making a list of his linen, and of keeping it in repair with my own hands; I also made him give me every evening a note of

our expenses. Mirabeau, in those days much cramped in his resources, did not know how to count; he gave me all his money to take care of, and it has always been the same in less unhappy times, until, by a fatal error, he compelled his best friend to abandon him. If now and then gold was seen in his purse, it was simply there for show; if he had occasion to change a gold piece, he immediately told me of it, as if the money belonged to me. His great pleasure was to make me presents; he was continually bringing them home, and though they were for my use, he was so afraid of my grumbling at him, that a thing which cost him three louis he pretended to have bought for thirty-six francs; but as he always dealt on credit, and it was I who had to pay the bills, the trickery was soon discovered. When the presents were trinkets, after having worn them for two or three days to please him, I arranged with the dealers to take them back; when it was a hat or a bonnet, the evil was without remedy; but I had not the courage to quarrel with him upon his amiable generosity.

“The life we led during the two months and a half that preceded our journey to London was very simple: Mirabeau wrote the whole of the morning, we nearly always dined together, after which he went out to see some friends, and supped regularly every evening at Mademoiselle Julie's (Julie Carreau, afterwards the wife of Talma), where the best male company of Paris assembled.”

Afraid of the active hostility of M. de Miromesnil, Mirabeau and Madame de Nehra decamp to England, whence before long the lady returns to Paris to manage her lover's affairs, and to intercede for him with the authorities. She goes to Versailles to solicit personally, and—

“A few days after I had the satisfaction of learning that Mirabeau could in all safety re-enter France. There is no need to ask whether he came quickly; it was the first time that we had been separated; he wrote me the most impassioned letters; he rushed to me the moment he believed he could do so without

danger. I had communicated to him a plan, the prospective of which filled him with joy. I thought that in the present condition of his affairs, a few years' seclusion would do him a considerable amount of good. I advised him to seclude himself at Mirabeau or elsewhere, provided it was in the country, there to remain tranquilly with me, to occupy himself with some great work, to give it all his care, and when brought to perfection, to reappear suddenly with it. We made up our minds to start as soon as possible, our trunks were packed, when something that happened to one very dear to us made us defer our departure. Coco,* whom we had taken with us, though he could neither speak nor walk, had frequent and violent attacks of illness, and a continual inflammation of the eyes. I imagined that inoculation, in preserving him for the future from a disease (small-pox), always dangerous, often mortal, would also prevent a recurrence of this disease of the eyes. It was decided that the operation should take place immediately, and that we should await his recovery to start. Nothing in the world would have induced me to leave this charming child, or allow any one else to nurse him during his attack of inoculation fever. In this interval, M. Etienne Clavière made every effort to induce Mirabeau to stay in Paris.

* * * * *

“Mirabeau continued to love me as much as ever, nay, more tenderly even, but he committed frequent infidelities; if he saw a pretty face, or if a woman gave him some provocation, he was ablaze in a moment. His intrigues did not last; he was often so weary of them that he consulted with me as to the best way of ridding himself of them with decency. He did not take the least trouble of concealing from me what gave me not the least pain; this man, whom they have depicted so false, was, on the contrary, so open, and I could read his soul so well, that every precaution would have been useless; I was perfectly easy with regard to his *liaisons* because I was sure of his heart. Nevertheless, in the summer of 1785, he had an intrigue that grieved my heart, and was near troubling our intimacy. Mirabeau became attached to a woman of high rank, and very vain, who despised every-

* M. Lucas de Montigny's pet name, by which he is designated in Mirabeau's will.

body not possessed of a hundred thousand francs income. He had increased his establishment with a lacquey, who was indispensable to him to carry his letters; and, to give himself an air of pomp, he added a *valet de chambre*; and, despite my protestations, set up a carriage. Madame de — was envious of our good understanding. Not daring to attack openly, for Mirabeau would have suffered this of no one, she endeavoured to make me ridiculous; she thought it absurd that a person of my age did not have a box at all the theatres, nor a bill of at least twenty thousand francs with Mademoiselle Bertin (a fashionable modiste). This, notwithstanding that my inclination lean towards *la toilette*. I love noble elegance in dress as much as I detest parade, but I am of opinion that adornment is necessary to a woman, it proceeds from gracefulness, and shows taste, taste shows delicacy; I myself do not know how to disentangle all this, but it seems to me that from the physical it leads to the moral; in fine, if I were a man, I should have some strange ideas on the way my mistress should habitually dress. Hence Madame de — touched a sensitive point; I desired neither diamonds nor laces. I might have wished to increase the number of my white muslins, and renew more frequently my gauzes, but I felt the necessity of economy in our circumstances; and, being bound to confess my foibles, I committed the one to take a dislike to the woman who made merry of my privations, though assuredly they were undergone voluntarily. Mirabeau has never refused me anything; on the contrary, he never thought anything good enough for me. There were essential reasons to prevent my friend breaking off his intimacy with her; I worried him, he flew into a passion and we had some words, which were always made up in the course of the day, for he confessed his wrongs in such good faith, he infused so much feeling in the forgiveness he craved, that I never had the courage to sulk with him for any length of time. It is in connexion with this lady that one morning I passed a quarter of an hour which I shall not forget as long as I live; since then we have often laughed about it, but there was a moment wherein I suffered as much as it is in nature to suffer. Mirabeau had just received a very significant note, the lady's handwriting and seal were very noticeable, the letter was on the table when the husband enters without being announced. After a few minutes

of animated conversation on public matters, he takes up the letter, turns it over on all sides, folds it in two and replaces it on the table. Mirabeau in his turn takes it up, I expect that he is going to put it in his pocket; but not at all, his mind was occupied elsewhere; entirely absorbed in his calculations, he was thinking neither of the woman nor of her love-letter; he adds another fold to the note and with the greatest *sang-froid* lays it down in the same spot. I stretch out my hand to take it, but too late, M. de — had taken hold of it, twirling it between his fingers. In this way the letter passed alternately from the hands of the husband into those of the lover, and from those of the lover into those of the husband, and this for full ten minutes, until the moment, when, all of a tremble, I found the means to seize and to take it out of sight."

Then follows a condensed account of the next few years, during part of which Mirabeau was sent on a secret mission to Berlin, Madame de Nehra and little Coco always accompanying. We also get an insight into the really innocent amusements and pastimes of the great tribune, many interesting details about his private life, all of which must be excluded for want of space, but showing the lovable nature of the man, whose only fault consisted in loving too much. We must hurry on to the *dénoûment*, which Madame de Nehra herself tells with evident reluctance.

"Here I tremble and hesitate; how can I lift the veil with which I would for ever cover the errors of my friend? Nevertheless I must; I feel bound while confessing his foibles, to shelter him from the reproach of ingratitude which those who are imperfectly acquainted with everything that preceded our rupture have never ceased to prefer against him. If he committed an error, it was involuntarily. Ever carried away by the

passion of the moment, he never cast a glance at the future; if he lacerated my heart in its tenderest spot, his, I am sure, had no part in the injuries I received. He loved me dearly, and assuredly did not want to lose me, though he did nothing to keep me. I am proud and sensitive, I required a sacrifice; it was indispensable to his glory, it was part of my happiness; he often promised it, and always failed to keep his word.* Excepting a few slight clouds in 1785, we had never had any altercations; all changed in an instant; he felt his wrongs, he saw me irritated at them, but instead of repairing he aggravated them by suspecting me of a similar feeling. He imagined that I no longer loved him. The demon of jealousy blew from one quarter and the other; wicked people kindled the flame in this boiling character. Until now he had been content with the kind of attachment I had for him; it was pointed out to him that it in no way approached the passion I had or pretended to have; this was sufficient to alarm his sensitiveness. It mattered little that he could not accuse me of the slightest imprudence; for knowing him to be jealous, I had always taken the utmost precautions to give him no cause for the least suspicion, to a degree that during his absence I only went abroad on his affairs, and received no one except those who came on his business. Happy in my home, my books were sufficient amusement; the esteem of honest people, the progress and caresses of the dear child he had confided to me, the reward of all my sacrifices. Hence Mirabeau never gave me a positive reproach, but our happy times were gone for ever. I endeavoured to go to Passy to divert my mind. He had a small elegant apartment furnished; he often came to see me, and there were always stormy scenes. He passed a part of his life in fits of anger difficult to describe, the rest in weeping at my feet and in cursing the person who brought this trouble into our home, and to whom he nevertheless was always weak enough to return. This state of life was too violent, it was beyond my strength, I felt myself dying. I took a resolve, and an extreme one; I left Mirabeau's house on the 18th of August,

* This refers to the *liaison* with Madame Lejay, the cessation of which Madame de Nehra insisted upon, and of which we shall say a few words in conclusion.

and the following morning I had left the kingdom, For a long while it caused me regret, at present it causes me remorse. I did not depart in cool blood, three times I returned to the bedside of the child who slept. Poor little one, I foresaw his despair when at his awakening he should not find me. I embraced him, letting my tears freely flow on his childish face, this was the most cruel moment of all: even now I do not know how I had the strength to desert him."

Of a Madame Lejay, who ousted a Madame de Nehra, we would say as little as possible, and that little temperately. We do not want the hatchet that kills, but the knife that dissects. We bury the hero, the miscreant we cut down from the gibbet, and send him to the theatre. As a specimen of the latter kind Madame Lejay becomes interesting, especially if we regard her in the light of Nature's instrument to cause a man's fall.

Tu souffriras par où tu as péché, is no doubt part of the command promulgated by Nature as a deterrent to excess, yet it seems hard to humanity that the Nemesis shall be viler than the sinner—that the Circe should be more swinish than the great Ulysses, whom in this instance she succeeds in beguiling.

Mirabeau, in order to facilitate his political career, had started a journal, the *Courrier de Provence*, of which Lejay, the woman's husband, was the responsible publisher and co-proprietor. Avaricious as well as debauched, she took advantage of her daily communication with the great orator to gain an empire over him, which

became at last tyrannical. The journal proved a great success. "In a few days," says Etienne Dumont, another partner, and one of Mirabeau's most faithful biographers, "our list of subscribers amounted to three thousand;" a great number in those days. The demand from the provinces was equally great, but instead of attending to the business, Madame Lejay pocketed the money, and the subscribers might whistle for their papers. When the co-partners demanded the accounts, Madame Lejay hid the books. "She had increased her business on her profits," and on the losses of others "had stocked her warehouse; her petty newspaper shop had become a large bookseller's, everything proclaimed a recently acquired opulence, but she had spent the whole of the subscriptions, and would not refund the money that was due to us." Under those circumstances, Dumont and another friend (Duroverai) withdrew in disgust from the concern, but Mirabeau remained. He "was placed between two batteries; he was annoyed at the dishonesty of Madame Lejay, and said to her one day in my presence, "Madame Lejay, if probity did not exist, it should be invented as a means to enrich oneself." But Madame Lejay had a different morality, and Mirabeau's *liaisons* with this astute and strong-minded woman did not allow him to adopt a very decided tone; she

possessed too many of his secrets, too many anecdotes about him ; she was too dangerous and wicked for him to dare break with her, though he was weary of her and felt himself degraded by this association, now that he was moving in so superior a sphere. Lejay was an imbecile, who promised everything, but who trembled like a child at the sight of his wife. Mirabeau, ashamed at not standing by us, swore that the National Assembly was more easy to manage than a woman who had made up her mind. Violence was powerless against cool-bloodedness ; she answered his reproaches with the most piquant sallies. "The whole of the bar," said he, "would pale before her sooner than convince her ; I defy the most astute lawyer to find the schemes she invents."

Dumont has treated the matter in the most charitable light ; he wanted to save the memory of his great friend from worse contumely than it had undergone already ; but we no more believe that Mirabeau was afraid of Madame Lejay than we believe that Samson was afraid of Delilah, or Marc Antony of Cleopatra. What bound Mirabeau to this Megæra was neither fear nor love, but the frenzied excess of sexual passion which had grown upon him, as the craving for drink grows upon the dipsomaniac ; till, in the end, mere alcohol, however strong,

fails to satisfy him, unless it be drugged and poisoned. As the honest dealer will not supply such, he is obliged to go to the lowest dram-shop, where they bully and rob and eject him, but whither he returns nevertheless when the fit is upon him, for though he tires and feels his own degradation, he is never satiated. *Lassata nondum satiata recessit.*

“What our contempt doth often hurl from us,
We wish it ours again.”

This is why at last we see Mirabeau,

“The triple pillar of the world, transformed
Into a strumpet’s fool.”

We may add “and tool.” For the intensity of a vice which had become an infirmity was fatal in its consequences. We who look back at Mirabeau from the distance of a century are content to forget all evil and remember nothing but the great deeds. Macaulay’s remark about Sallust stands good for the great French tribune. His works remain, while the unfortunate husbands who caught him in their houses at unseasonable hours are forgotten. The number who suffered by his personal vices was small, while those who benefited by his great genius and endeavours in their behalf may be reckoned by millions. Contrary to what Marc Antony said of Cæsar’s, Mirabeau’s vices were interred with his bones,

while the good he wrought lived after him. But these vices, while he lived, were eminently calculated to lower him in the consideration of his fellow-men, for they were not counter-balanced as yet by the results of his good deeds, which bore fruit only after he died. It is the fundamental basis of the world's veneration for an eminent man that it thinks him elevated above the weaker feelings of humanity in general. To gain this ascendant the great man should at least be free from those disorders which are incompatible with the measure of esteem he needs, to obtain for his name that certain *prestige*, which may or may not be a sham, but which is necessary for his unfettered action. This esteem Mirabeau, as every one knows, failed to obtain. It is doubtful whether, if he had lived, his contemporaries would have installed him in a position of trust. His more than degrading debauches were the drawback to his otherwise unparalleled hold upon the masses. A Lord Chancellor must not be sued for breach of promise; he certainly must not figure in a police-court as the defendant in an affiliation case. Mirabeau's offences against the morals of society were much more flagrant than these supposed peccadilloes of the imaginary Chancellor, and he knew but too well how they damaged him in the opinion of the public. "I am cruelly ex-

piating the errors of my youth," he said once to Etienne Dumont, sobbing like a child. The errors of his youth, and even those of his riper age, would have been forgiven, had he known when to stop, but his vile *amouraille* with a Madame Lejay was past condoning. Madame de Nehra's indulgence for his many faults, redeemed by a matchless power of fascination, proceeding from a perhaps too generous nature, may be taken as the standard of the feeling of the world towards Mirabeau. But she also insisted that the scandal should cease, electing to leave him rather than countenance this, as she had countenanced so many love-intrigues. "Under those circumstances I insisted (and I think I had the right to do so) that he should make the complete sacrifice of a person who caused the discord in our home, and that he should abandon certain bill-transactions. Everything was promised, and every promise was broken." With the best intentions he could not break off his connexions with Madame Lejay. It is but too true what Madame de Nehra remarks elsewhere—"Unfortunately, the sweet and peaceful affections failed to satisfy him."

" 'Tis the pest
Of love that fairest joys give most unrest,
That things of delicate and tenderest worth
Are swallowed all, and made a second dearth
By one consuming flame."

And when this true and noble-hearted woman objected there were angry scenes, fanned into blaze by a wicked and degraded wretch, who flaunted her vice openly and prided herself upon her debauches. The influence of Madame Lejay, whom Mirabeau blindly obeyed, gave his political enemies a most powerful weapon against him. The fence of his divinity was shattered by this too flagrant contempt of all decency. His reputation was lost. And, as usually happens, he flung the remains of his probity after it in despair. The only check to his downward career was Madame de Nehra; he could not bear her reproaches and the sight of her sorrow at his degradation, he virtually flung her after his eputation, saying with Goethe—

"Sie ist vollkommen, und sie fehlet
Darin allein, das sie mich liebt."

Thus he prepared himself for social gibbetting. Mirabeau reminds us of the son who by his bad conduct killed his father, and then murdered his mother, because "he could not bear to see her grieve for her husband." His frenzied passion knew no longer any bounds, it engendered the want of money, the facility with which he lavished it on all hands entailed the necessity of receiving it from all hands; he did not sell himself to the Court, but he allowed it to pay him, and the splendid rôle of moderator

of the Revolution received a stain from his intrigues with the brother of the King, and from his secret interviews with Marie Antoinette, who but too willingly played the part of decoy, knowing full well the powerful influence a beautiful woman might gain on such a nature as Mirabeau's. His Maker had mercy upon him and removed him from this life before everything was irretrievably lost, when there was still sufficient of greatness left to make his contemporaries mourn, and posterity remember his giant genius. Before his death a reconciliation took place with Madame de Nehra. "I do not know what might have happened had he lived," she says. But he died—and it was better so.

"On the 4th of April, 1791, there is a funeral procession extending four miles; King's ministers, senators, national guards, and all Paris, torch-light, wail of trombones and music, and the tears of men; mourning of a whole people, such mourning as no modern people ever saw for one man." It is Gabriel Honoré Riquetti, Comte de Mirabeau (he refused to take his father's title), accompanied to his last resting-place when but forty-two years old.

*"Heroes die first,
And those whose heart is dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket."*

* * * * *

For god-like in his strength, yet more weak than man in his want of self-control was Mirabeau; a living poem, consisting of two parts, a hell and a heaven; at once the sublimest and most degraded of human beings; shaking to its foundations an empire that had stood for centuries, while being controlled by the vilest of courtesans; a Colossus with ten minds and ten hearts, wound up for the allotted space of life at a break-neck pitch, and henceforth utterly beyond his own regulation, thus wearing out the fabric in half the time; the animal and the angel within him at perpetual discord, the former conquering the latter at last, though not left in the undisturbed possession of his victory, but harassed by the sentiment of right and wrong, inborn in the greatest savage as in the most civilised human being. It would be a bold proceeding to frame a theory wherewith to judge such a giant, for the very naturalness of his errors requires an acumen unnecessary with abnormal failing. Nothing more easy than to say, "It is the simplest thing in the world, Mirabeau was an inspired animal," which would be tantamount to saying that the brain only obeys its own laws, that it recognises neither the necessities of life nor the dictates of honour. But what then would become of Mirabeau's great talents, which certainly could not have

been produced without a will, for we all know that brain alone is not genius, that it requires the will to direct it. A great talent is impossible without a great will. Was this will in Mirabeau so entirely occupied in directing his talent that it had no leisure left to curb his instincts? or had it from the first perceived that the struggle was unequal, and submitted to leave the animal alone. Perhaps we must content ourselves with this explanation, any other seems impossible, because we cannot reduce the sentiments to identical formulas, they combine in each individual with the elements most proper to him, and take his physiognomy.

The most remarkable trait in Mirabeau's character was that he had no notion of duty, sentiment stood him instead, he did what he pleased, not what he should. His whole life was one negation of duty. Most men have two characters, or rather one character divided into two, their own, which they display in secret, the world's, which they wear as a mask. Not so Mirabeau. He was everywhere the same. Hypocrisy was foreign to him. Therein lay the charm which with those who knew him best redeemed all his faults. If there had been nothing more in him than the passionate, sensual, and eloquent giant, such as the majority picture him, the attachment of Madame de

Nehra would be inexplicable. For that Mirabeau at twenty-five, confined to a small town, should have introduced himself to a young and beautiful woman with the consent of an old, disagreeable, and jealous husband, who admits and welcomes him, reassured no doubt by his ugliness; that he should seduce this young woman and elope with her; that the lovers, arrested, separated, and imprisoned, should persist in their passion on account of the obstacles opposed to it; that this passion should die the moment these obstacles are removed, all this is perfectly consistent with and accountable by the transports of youth and the senses.

But what argues for the almost divine powers of Mirabeau is that, at the age of thirty-six, with an ugliness that repulses at first sight, as Madame de Nehra herself has told us, he should have inspired a young and charming girl of nineteen, accomplished and refined, completely free in her choice, with an affection, calm, sincere, and serious, in which there entered neither vanity, sensuality, nor interest. For Madame de Nehra's affection, apart from her own confession, though indulgent in many instances, shows nothing servile or self-seeking, it is clear-sighted and forgiving, it is removed from the blindness of passion, as from the coolness of mere friendship; after sharing for five

years the precarious and harassed life of its object, it chooses, from a feeling of wounded pride, the very epoch when Mirabeau arrives at opulence to quit him. That Mirabeau should have been beloved thus by a most superior woman is an incontestable proof that the violence of his character and his desires was more than counterbalanced by an inexhaustible fund of goodness, sensibility, and delicacy, and that, to employ Madame de Nehra's own metaphor, "Oromaze had contributed as much as Arimane* to form one of the strongest compounds of good and evil the world has ever seen."

* * * *

Nature is as the master in Jesus' parable, "who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods." Only she bestows her physical gifts pretty well alike. She wishes neither for abstinence in man, like the servant who hid his talent, nor for excess, but for the moderate use, that her children be increased. Woe to him that disregards her commands, for she is a stern task-mistress, a good pay-mistress also; unlike the human employer, she does not pay wage regularly,

* We have left the names Oromaze and Arimane which Madame de Nehra employs in her metaphor untranslated, uncertain whether they apply to the principals of the Magian system or to those of the Zoroastrian Trinity.

but discharges her debt for good or evil once for all. This is no divine lesson we mean to inculcate, merely Nature's command. We saw the effect of abstinence in Swift, we have seen the effect of the opposite vice in Mirabeau. Both suffered by their own sins. Spinoza points the moral. "Our duty is neither to ridicule the affairs of men, nor to deplore, but simply to understand them."





EPILOGUE.

THE AUTHOR'S VISION.

“Ihr Weisen, hoch und tief gelahrt,
Die ihr's ersinnt und wiszt,
Wie, wo und wann sich Alles paart?
Warum sich's liebt und küsst?
Ihr hohen Weisen, sagt mir's an!
Ergrübelt, was mir da,
Ergrübelt mir, wo, wie und wann,
Warum mir so geschah?”

BÜRGER.

“From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the ripener should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory.

Let those whom Nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featureless, and rude, barrenly perish.

She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.”

SHAKSPEARE, *Sonnets*.

“L'amour prête son nom à un nombre infini de commerces qu'on lui attribue, et où il n'a non plus de part que le Doge à ce qui se fait à Vénise.”—LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

OUR duty is neither to ridicule the affairs of
of men, nor to deplore, but simply to
understand them;” I concluded, closing the

manuscript from which I had read a few passages now and then to a friend, while my work was in progress.

I leant back in my chair, turning rather anxiously towards my auditor, expecting a few words of comment of some sort, a thing from which he had scrupulously abstained during the many evenings he had most attentively listened to me.

"Go on," he said, standing with his face to the fire, rolling a cigarette between his fingers. He had not seen me close the manuscript. "Go on," he repeated, "I am all attention."

"There is no more," I said, rising from my chair, "the book is finished."

"Finished? Surely, no. What conclusion do you draw from all those various aspects of one passion?"

"What conclusion? Why Rochefoucauld's: *Qu'il n'y qu'une sorte d'Amour, mais qu'il y en a mille différentes copies.*"

"That's an epigram, not a conclusion. Depend upon it, your readers will not let you off so cheaply. As you spoke figuratively, I will do the same. Your readers will not accept the symbol of wisdom for wisdom itself. They do not want a cheque on a bank, which they will have the trouble to cash themselves, they want the current coin wherewith to go to market at once."

“What would you have me do?” I asked, impelled by the desire of asking rather than by the intention of profiting by the answer.

“Do? I would have you do your duty, or rather that enjoined by Spinoza. ‘Neither ridicule nor deplore, but simply understand.’ The easier part of his dictum, to abstain from doing, you have moderately well complied with, now try to understand, and above all try to make your readers understand.”

“Understand what?”

“The cause that impels men to sacrifice duty, honour, kindred, country, everything to obtain the woman of their fancy.”

“But that cause is love?”

“Perhaps,” said my friend significantly. “That’s the poet’s and the novelist’s point of view. You are neither the one nor the other. I simply repeat your own words. You have said so yourself somewhere in your book. The greatest blasphemy modern morals have committed is to apply indiscriminately the word love to the reproduction of the species. If Dante’s feeling for Beatrice was love; if Hans Memling’s passion for Jehanne of Burgundy was love, surely Lope de Vega’s feeling for Dorothea, Mirabeau’s sentiment for Madame Lejay, should not be described by the same word. Love is sacrifice; it can continue to exist

without gratification, which it craves, it is true, but which is not indispensable to its duration. Love is a feeling complete in itself. It is independent of reciprocity, of gratified desire, absolutely incompatible with anything base or humiliating towards the object of its attachment. That to my mind is love. To apply it to any other feeling is defiling the word."

"But I had no other word, except the one I have selected, *amour*, which shapes its meaning according to the passion it portrays, which, though pure in itself, is like the fairy in that pretty story of Ariosto, condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake."

"I grant that you had a difficulty to contend with. Language, as modern society understands it, is so arbitrary that you are often debarred from using the right word; a reason the more why you should endeavour to explain that while the *Crescite et multiplicamini* is Nature's command, pure love springs from an entirely different motive."

"How can I do this when the two have so inextricably been entangled by civilisation, which, profiting by Christianity, chivalry, the idealism of the troubadours, has used the one as a screen for the other? When it would cry shame upon me for kicking down the screen;

when like the dozen individuals in my preface, one would say, 'Indecent,' and the other eleven turn away without listening or seeing?"

"One neither cries nor is tempted in the wilderness nowadays, the world is too thickly populated. You are bound to show that what the world calls love is in nine cases out of ten not love at all, but simply Nature's will in its manifestation through man, that while man himself thinks to act for his own pleasure, he is simply obeying her."

"But why tackle so disagreeable a subject? Why disillusionise the world? Why tell it that ideal love, save in a few rare cases, does not exist? Why tell man that he is an animal in disguise?"

"That's just where you are mistaken. Man is not an animal in disguise. That is what your poets have said to get out of the difficulty, when the deeper motive had to be treated. They have rhapsodised and analysed, and painted, and all the while treated of the drunken man, without noticing the one that supplied the liquor."

"The public-house is not a fit subject for the poet."

"Perhaps not, but an eminently fit subject for the excise officer and analyst, who should see that people get their liquor pure."

"What if the pure liquor does not afford the same satisfaction as the drugged? What if the

epicure prefers an entrée, of which he knows not the ingredients?"

"But Nature does not grow drugged grape, nor entrées. What if you can show that Nature knows best, that the feeling which she implanted in mankind is better without the mawkish sentimentality with which it has become coated?"

"You may just as well maintain that we should discard knives and forks and plates and table-linen, and return to the old mode of tearing our food with our fingers."

"That is sophistry; but I will answer you in the same strain. Rather than serve a putrid pheasant in a silver dish, it were better to tear it with your fingers. It would stamp you as a savage at once, while now you set the example of worse than savageness by falsifying it under the name of refinement."

"But we must have refinement."

"By all means, but let it come by eliminating the coarse from the natural, not by mixing with it something coarser, like sugar refiners mix blood with the natural saccharine product; let it be flavoured with some delicate aroma, which shall be discoverable to the taste only, but not coloured with a poison that makes children cry out for it, regardless whether it will harm them or not; nay, crying for it after it has harmed them, and in spite of all common sense."

I kept silent.

“Believe me,” resumed my friend, after a short pause, “were people once to know the true impulse underlying that feeling of love upon which they pride themselves, they would be the happier for it. Instead of thinking themselves demi-gods, they would perceive that they are merely the instruments of Nature’s great tasks, and the world of common sense would not shrink from the knowledge. I think with you that it is a bold undertaking to enlighten it, but unless a writer be in advance of those he writes for, his very *raison d’être* ceases. I will not pronounce an opinion upon your book beyond this one, that unless you add a chapter it will be incomplete. Up till now you have been the reverse of Saul, who started to seek his father’s asses, and found a kingdom. You started in search of a kingdom, and found a herd of asses, inspired certainly, but who, the reverse of Balaam’s, cursed where they should have blessed. Your *Amours of Great Men* will lead many a silly young man and girl to imagine that they may do as the men and women you have described. They will not stay to consider that genius, like charity, is not only a cloak that covereth many sins, that it is an enamel which gilds them, but will make the errors of a wise man their rule, thinking that they can become perfections in a

fool ; they will fancy that because a rider once fell from his horse, every one that tumbles from his horse must necessarily be a rider. And now, good-night." With this he disappeared.

* * * *

For a long while after he left I sat and pondered my friend's words. Was it true that Nature, to hide the materialness of her designs, had aided Civilisation and Poetry to play mankind a trick by leading them to believe that they were fulfilling their own destiny, while they were merely furthering Nature's deep-laid scheme for the perpetuation of the species? How long I pondered thus I know not, but I must have fallen asleep, and the mind continued its work whilst the body was at rest. My friend's words resolved themselves into a picture, very real for the moment. I dreamt.

I saw myself like Saul, wandering along, inquiring not for the asses but for the "Kingdom of Love," asking of every one I met. And the poets, whom I knew by the lyre in their hands and the laurel on their brows, shook their heads and would not tell me, and the philosophers, whom I distinguished by the tomes under their arms, said there was no such place ; that it was a city of mirage ; and the poets interrupted and told them to be still, for fear I should repeat what I had heard and spoil their trade, and thus I wandered

and wandered, until, too tired to wander any longer, I sat down on a stone by the way-side, in front of a large and dense thicket.

Suddenly I felt the hot breath of some living thing upon my cheek, and looking up I beheld a mule.

“Who and what are you?” I exclaimed, not staying to think that the animal could not answer.

But to my great astonishment it did speak.

“My name is Paradox, I am the child of Pegasus and Balaam’s ass. Fear not, I mean you well. Follow me, and you shall have your wish, and know the constitution whereon is based the ‘Kingdom of Love.’”

Mechanically I rose and prepared to follow. Through brush and bramble, now across a smiling meadow, then through a deep and gloomy wood, Paradox led me, until we came to a mountainous district, where through a large cleft in a rock we entered a cave.

Traversing a long and tortuous gallery, but faintly illumined by a small disc of light that grew bigger as we advanced, Paradox stood aside and motioned me to pass before him into a large circular space lighted from above by an aperture cut through the rock. Not a word had been exchanged between us during the journey. The place was literally strewn with books. Piled against the walls, the ground covered with them,

wherever the foot alighted it was sure to tread upon some tome. Newspapers, periodicals in all languages, from all countries, were spread upon the seats cut in the stone. In answer to my mute gaze of amazement, Paradox began.

“Welcome to my home. I see you are surprised, you are simply one of the many. These you see there,” pointing with his near foreleg to a pile of volumes, torn from their covers, and half-consumed, as if rats had been gnawing them, “are my daily food. They are not as savoury as thistles, but more nutritious. They are statistics of crimes, and births and deaths and marriages, and pauperism and drunkenness. Those there are medicine; correctives,” he added, kicking over a heap of fashionable novels, “these are stimulants,” he placed his hoof upon a well-bound edition of the British poets, “those,” another kick of the hindlegs, “are sedatives.” I caught one of the volumes in my hand; it was a recent work on philosophy.

There was a moment of silence.

“I have been expecting you for some time, I knew you would come, for I saw your book announced in the papers. I never doubted but that you, in common with most men, would apply, as I have seen you do, to the poets for information upon your subject.”

“I imagined they were the fittest to apply to,” I ventured to remark humbly.

“You are wrong, but it is a pardonable error. The poet merely catches the essence of things; the philosopher’s province is to analyse. You might just as well have applied to the coroner to give you a diagnosis of heart disease or inflammation of the brain. The jury who hear him describe their effects think that he knows all about them. He simply states facts, ornamenting them with a language of his own. For the causes that produce these facts and of which he is ignorant, he is obliged to rely upon the physician’s knowledge.”

“We are in the habit,” he continued, “of seeing the poet occupied in depicting the various aspects of sexual love. It is, as a rule, the chief theme of all dramatic works, of the tragic as well as of the comic, of the romantic as of the classic. These works are, with regard to their principal contents, nothing else than many-sided, shorter or longer descriptions of this passion. Because with the exception, perhaps, of the love of life itself, it is the strongest feeling in the human breast, and in many instances it has been known to triumph even over that. Therefore Rochefoucauld is both wrong and right when he says, *Il est du véritable amour comme de l'apparation des esprits ; tout le monde en parle, mais peu de gens en ont vu.* A great many people have both seen and felt the effects of true love, as the world conceives it,

only the true love of the world, what it most prides itself upon, is simply a gigantic egotism, and what is more, an egotism beyond its control. The brilliant French epigrammatist, with his concentrated wisdom, gilt like so many pills of the fashionable chemists, so that people might swallow them more easily, was far from suspecting this truth. True love, which means the entire negation of self, which means renouncement, not gratification, the world does not know. It thinks that in *Romeo and Juliet* it sees the picture of ideal love, while after all it sees nothing but earthly love, of the most vehement kind. If the love of these two young people of Verona had been ideal, they would have gone on living, happy in the consciousness that spiritually they were all in all to each other, and not killed themselves because circumstances denied them possession. But when even the master-mind of a Shakspeare mistook the consequences of baffled *Geschlechtstriebe*, in its noblest form, it is true, but, after all, *Geschlechtstriebe*, for the most exalted phase of self-sacrifice, it is not surprising that ordinary mankind should share his error. In this respect Rousseau was perhaps nearer the portrayal of ideal love than Shakspeare, when in the second part of his *Nouvelle Héloïse* he attempts to let St. Preux and Julie live together under one roof, without more than mental com-

munion. Why, I have said all this," my host interrupted himself, "is to excuse you in your own eyes for applying to the poets. Had you appealed to the philosophers, they would either have denied the existence of this love, as they were on the point of doing, or else led you to believe that the matter was too unimportant to be treated seriously."

"They could not have done so," I answered, "for I know it to be impossible that either a mere chimera or anything foreign and unimportant to humanity, a mere phantom of the air, could have occupied all those great poets, that it could have commanded the attention and sympathy of all mankind for so many thousand years.

"You speak truly," said my strange Mentor. "Experience has taught us that Werther and Jocopo Ortis are not mere creations of the poet's brain, that they exist in real life. The world shows us every year at least half a dozen such; *sed ignotis perierunt mortibus illi*. Only their sorrowful ends find no other chroniclers than the clerks of the Registrar-General or the leader-writers of the papers. At any rate, of them we hear in some way, but there are hundreds upon whose sufferings the door of the lunatic asylum closes for ever. Both these are the victims of unrequited love, but there are others who, like

Romeo and Juliet, commit suicide, preferring to die rather than live apart from each other, despite their knowledge that their passion is mutual, who elect to forego the sublime happiness of loving and being beloved, rather than not see their happiness consummated by possession. It is they who afford food for study to the philosopher, for their mad acts prove but too conclusively that the natural craving is more powerful than the mere satisfaction of knowing themselves beloved. It reverses at one blow Petrarch's theory

' Pur mi consola, che morir per lei
Meglio è che gioir d'altra.'

Even hope, the strongest incentive to live, retires to abandon the place to despair."

"Is it not wonderful, then," I asked, "that all this being true, the philosophers have been content to abandon the study of a passion which plays so important a rôle among mankind to the poets, that hitherto they have refrained from treating the matter seriously, from giving us their views upon it?"

"Not all," replied my host, suddenly rearing, and reaching to the top of a large pile of books, one of which he took between his teeth, "not all," he repeated, resuming his natural position. "Of course you know what Plato has said upon the subject. Still nowadays we consider his sayings

more as speculations than anything else, we have relegated his opinions to the domain of the unattainable. There are also Rousseau, Kant, Senancourt, Michelet, Stendhall, Emerson and many others, but they have all been afraid of the world's outcry. The one who has not been afraid is best worth reading, and that is Schopenhauer. Here is his book. He foresaw the cavillings of those who would have man all spirit and no matter, but they have not deterred him. I do not pretend to give you an exact translation, nor the whole of his *Metaphysik der Geschlechtsliebe*, simply a few extracts with their comments, which you may note down at once, so as to save yourself the trouble of having to go to the original again."

"Remember," he said, stretching himself down on a comfortable litter of fresh moss and leaves, while I took out my pencil and book, "remember when you do not agree with my comments, who and what I am, that my very nature enables me to judge impartially, remember also, 'that I am an ass;' though they call me a mule, 'yet forget not that I am an ass.'"

Having given vent to this Dogberrian witticism with a chuckle, much resembling the orthodox asinine braying, only much suppressed, there was a short silence, only broken by the rustling of the

pages of the book which Paradox had laid in front of him, and which by a dexterous movement of nostrils and tongue combined he managed to turn over.

“I need not tell you,” he began, looking up at me, and pausing for a moment, “how difficult it is to tell mankind the truth, especially with regard to the subject under consideration. Since civilisation has grown upon us, and even before that, it has been love’s great pretension not to be a pleasure only, not to be a mere gratification of the senses. If anything, this pretension does honour to love. As love animates and fires not only the body, but also the soul, it is most natural that the latter should have mistaken the exuberance of life which it feels under the circumstances for a superabundance of strength, and that it should have felt itself more elevated because it feels itself intoxicated. It is, after all, the error of the drunken man who thinks himself a Hercules, while indeed he is weaker than a child, who thinks himself a demi-god when he is more debased than an animal. This very illusion makes lovers so seductive while under the influence of the passion, because it produces an exaltation of soul which, without changing the faculties of their nature in kind, changes them in degree, they are excited and elevated by an instinctive movement as it were. Now tell these

people, who have been thus intoxicated, and who perhaps fondly cherish the recollections, that this intoxication has been produced by something very material, they will despise you, but tell it to the young who are still in the heyday of their spooneyism—you see I know slang—they will probably tear your book to pieces, not even giving the butterman or the trunkmaker the chance of buying it as waste-paper.”

I nodded my head silently, I could but approve.

“No one knew this tendency to idealise in the young, and in the old too, for that matter, better than Schopenhauer; he was perfectly on his guard against it. Listen to what he says, previous to tackling his subject seriously:—

“The least applause I have to hope for is from those who themselves are under the sway of this passion, and whose overwrought sensations find vent in the sublimest and most ethereal images; they will deem my view too material, too physical, however metaphysical and transcendental I may know it to be at bottom. To begin with, let me tell them, that the object which now inspires them with madrigals and sonnets, would scarcely win one of their glances, if they happened to have been born some eighteen years sooner.

“For all love-sickness, however ethereally

it may conduct itself, has its sole root in the sexual instinct, nay, is throughout nothing but that instinct specified, having selected its object, becoming individualised in the strongest sense of the word. Recollecting this, and considering the weighty rôle which the sexual instinct, in all its gradations, plays, not only in the novel and in the drama, but also in real life, where it ceaselessly occupies the best half of the force and thought of the younger members of humanity; where it becomes the supreme goal of all human aspirations; where it exercises a baleful influence on the most important concerns; where it interferes at every hour with the most momentous occupations; where it occasionally throws confusion in the greatest minds; where it does not scruple to step in amidst the conferences of statesmen, the researches of the *savant*, to hide its plunder, love-letters and locks of hair, in the portfolios of the one, in the manuscript of the other; where it daily occasions the most degraded and pernicious traffic, dissolves the most sacred relationships, tears asunder the firmest ties, makes havoc of life, wealth, and health, causes the sacrifice of rank, happiness, and reputation, makes the honest man unscrupulous, the hitherto steadfast and true a traitor, where in short it appears as an antagonistic fiend, overthrowing, devastating every-

thing; when we consider all this, we cannot refrain from asking ourselves, "why this ado, this noise, this worry, anxiety and alarm, for so petty a cause of every Jack finding his Jill, why should such a trifle play so weighty a rôle, and produce such unceasing confusion and interruption in the otherwise so well-regulated life of man?" But the first serious inquirer would be met by the Spirit of Truth, who would answer him—"We are dealing with more than a trifle, the importance of the subject fully justifies the seriousness and zeal of the pursuit. The final aim of all love-affairs, whether enacted in the sock or the buskin, or in the world of reality, is indeed more momentous than what affair soever in man's life, and therefore amply deserving the deep earnestness wherewith every one occupies himself with it. It has for its aim nothing less than the CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEXT GENERATION. The *Dramatis Personæ* who will make their entrances when we are about to make our exits are having their being and destiny shaped and determined by this so frivolous love-commerce."

Here Paradox ceased reading, evidently prepared to answer any question I might ask; nor was I slow in availing myself of the implied permission.

"I think I understand what you have read, but if this prompting of Nature is so universal in mankind, as no doubt it is, whence arises the

preference we see so unmistakably expressed. Why will a man or a woman select another man or woman, not at all beautiful or accomplished, nay, often the reverse, while the most beautiful, refined, cultured, and amiable, leave him or her either cool, or inspire them with a positive aversion. Is this feeling the result of imagination or is it determined by Nature?"

"Your question is a sensible one, and I can best answer it by a simile borrowed from your own profession. In the author the wish to produce generally precedes the determination what to produce. His choice of subject is not the mere result of chance or inclination, but the compliance with the bent of his particular genius. If he listen not to this voice, and follow his own pleasure, he may produce, but the production will never be grand or sublime; he himself may pretend to be satisfied, but some inner voice will tell him that his work cannot live. Hence we have seen eminent writers, who started as poets, who deluded themselves into the belief that this was their vocation—an opinion the world declined to endorse—after which, guided by the adverse verdict, they found their true mission, and became the greatest prose writers of their century. Even so with love, when people have simply listened to the temporary promptings of the imagination or submitted to blind chance.

They married, and became the most unsuccessful, and consequently the most miserable, in existence. Do you know why? Because Nature resented the indignity. She avenged herself upon those for having preferred individual inclination to the contributing to the perfecting of the species. Therefore you may safely accept this conclusion: the *existence* of the coming generation is determined by sexual love in the abstract, its *essence* by the individual choice of a partner for the consummation of this desire. In the one case it is simply the manifestation of Nature for her own end, in the other the same manifestation supplemented by an individually directed desire to produce by means of the fittest co-operation something perfect. In the latter case the sexual instinct, though in itself a subjective necessity, is apt to assume the mask of an objective admiration wherewith to cheat the inner consciousness, because Nature needs this stratagem to obtain her own ends. But that this is mere sham is amply proved by this admiration never being satisfied without possession. No certainty of reciprocated admiration will console a lover for non-consummation. On the other hand, possession in itself without returned love is often accepted. Hence forced marriages, accomplished by dint of magnificent gifts, by the bribe of position, and so forth. The poets

attribute this to the egotism of the lover, to the egotism of desire. Listen to Racine in *Titus and Berenice*. Domitian, in speaking of his mistress, says, hers is not love—

‘ Quand elle ne regarde et n’aime que soi-meme.’

To which Albin, his confidant, answers—

‘ Seigneur, s’il m’est permis de parler librement,
 Dans toute la Nature aime-t-on autrement ?
 L’amour-propre est la source en nous de tous les autres,
 C’en est le sentiment qui forme tous les nôtres ;
 Lui seul allume, éteint, ou change nos désirs,
 Les objets de nos vœux le sont de nos plaisirs ;
 Vous-même, qui brûlez d’une ardeur si fidèle,
 Aimez-vous Domitie ou vos plaisirs en elle ?
 Et quand vous aspirez à des liens si doux
 Est-ce pour l’amour d’elle, ou pour l’amour de vous ?
 De sa possession l’aimable et chère idée
 Tient vos sens enchantés, et votre âme obsédée.
 Mais si vous conceviez quelques destins meilleurs,
 Vous porteriez bientôt toute cette âme ailleurs.
 La conquête est pour nous le comble des délices
 Vous ne vous figurez ailleurs que des supplices.
 C’est par-là qu’elle seule a droit de vous charmer,
 Et vous n’aimez que vous quand vous croyez l’aimer.’ ”

“ That’s what the poets know about it,” chuckled Paradox ; “ egotism there certainly is, but it is neither that of the lover nor of desire, it is the egotism of Nature, who requires a certain thing, which shall and must be accomplished with or without the consent of both or one of the human participators, who, as a rule, are profoundly unconscious of the destiny they help to accomplish.”

"I cannot write this down," I remonstrated, pausing in my task, the whole world will object to this terrible realism of my view; every young lover will cry shame upon me."

"Most likely," was Paradox's unperturbed answer; "yet this is the true mission of mankind, and when well considered a higher one than this mere blowing of poetic soap-bubbles. People will no doubt appreciate less the rôle Nature has mapped out for them—viz., the perfecting of the 'coming man'—than the rôle their own vanity causes them to enact; but, luckily for the well-being of the human species, they are but passive agents in the matter, their activity is instinct, nothing else. Besides," he added, "the world will not believe you or me or Schopenhauer, it will still continue to flatter itself, like the piston-rod of the engine, that it sets the train in motion, while all the while it is the steam generated by coal and water that propels the machine."

"Thus, if I read your theory aright," said I, "it means this—that man, imagining himself to be concerned with his own happiness in selecting a partner, is in reality but obeying the behest of the 'Genius of the Species,' who has selected for him, in the interest of the required mental and physical perfectibility of the human race?"

"Exactly," was the answer.

“Whence come, then, so many wretched unions, which at starting seemed to promise every prospect of happiness, where, to speak by the card, Nature seemed to have formed the pair for each other?”

“I have already shown you the reason why two people solely led by their imagination are likely to become miserable afterwards, so we need not refer to this again. I will therefore attempt to answer your other question at once. Love’s yearning, the *ἔμερος*, which in all its ramifications, has from time immemorial provided the poet with an inexhaustible theme for his effusions, this yearning which sees in the possession of the wished-for woman a picture of endless bliss, which creates an inexpressible sorrow at the thought that this bliss is beyond its reach—this yearning and sorrow could not obtain their materials from the mere requirements of an ephemeral individualism, but are the sighings of the ‘Spirit of the Species,’ who sees in them the loss or the gain of the irreparable means to his end, and therefore wails and laments so loudly. The ‘Species’ alone has endless life, and is therefore competent to foster endless desire, endless gratification, endless sorrow. But these feelings, remember, are imprisoned in the narrow breast of a mortal, no wonder then that this breast harbouring them seems often on the point

of bursting, because it fails to find sufficient outlet for this overcrowding emotion of either endless weal or endless woe. This is the material for all the sublime love-poetry which raises itself in soaring metaphor above everything earthly. This is Petrarch's theme, the stuff wherewith are manufactured fictitious lovers such as St. Preux, Werther, Orosmane, and a dozen others, who, without the knowledge of the feeling that created them, would remain inexplicable to us. I will not even discuss the probabilities of such passions as that of Werther and St. Preux, for they are fictitious characters; their passion may have been as vehement as it is painted, for they knew the women they were enamoured of. But Dante and Petrarch knew little or nothing of Beatrice and Laura. Shall we say that these two poets' imagination lent their mistresses charms which they may or may not have possessed? And do you think that this investiture with perfection created by the imagination alone would have been sufficient to make Dante endure all his trials, Petrarch sustain all his rebuffs? No; there was something more powerful behind, though these men, any more than others, knew it not. The 'Genius of the Species' had pointed out to them these women as the fittest for the fulfilment of his aim. It matters not that Laura was married

to another, that Beatrice was still a child. The 'Genius' never slumbers, nor does he concern himself with marriage, which he regards as a political and social institution, which he often takes pleasure in thwarting, as I shall show you anon. He alone is capable of perceiving at the first glance the value of certain material for the construction of the human race. Therefore, whatever sceptics may say, love at first sight is a terrible reality, and La Bruyère is perfectly right when he avers that *L'amour qui naît subitement est le plus long à guérir*. As a rule the greatest passions were conceived at a single glance. But do you know what this love at first sight means? Sorry as I am to obtrude the materialism of the view wherewith to rub off the gloss of the poetry, I feel bound to tell you. It means the first mental impulse towards the creation of the future child which the 'Genius of the Species' implants in the minds of two persons of the opposite sex. This idea may never be matured, adverse circumstances may nip it in the mental budding, but the two lovers who have become imbued with the idea are loth to part with it, nay, in many cases, prefer the recollection of the old to the conception of a newer idea. That is why the loss of the sweetheart is in most cases more painful even than the loss of wife or husband. For it does not only affect the

Individuum, it shatters to nought the hopes of the 'Genius,' who saw in the union of these lovers the means of perhaps a greater perfection of the species than had hitherto been attained. The hope of bliss is more difficult to abandon than the almost undoubted certainty of happiness. For this reason the 'Genius' often refuses to be comforted, and wails and laments. That is why the greatest heroes have not been ashamed to give vent to their love-complaints, they who generally bore all other sufferings with the most stoic fortitude. They had no choice in the matter, the 'Genius of the Species' spoke through them. That is why honour, duty, truth, are thrown to the wind when the sexual instinct in its most irresistible form—*i.e.*, the interest of the species—steps in and sees a certain advantage to be gained. Schopenhauer gives you an instance when he quotes the second act of Calderon's *Zenobia*, where Decius, after nobly withstanding all temptations, humbly confesses himself ready to sacrifice everything hitherto held dear for the love of the heroine of the play. In an outburst of most truly painted enthusiasm, he exclaims—

'Cielos, luego tu me quieres ?
Perdiera cien mil victorias,
Volviérame;' &c.

('Heavens, thou lovest me, then? A hundred thousand victories would I forego for this, retrace my career,' &c.)

 And Marc Antony to Cleopatra —

'Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
 Of the ranged empire fall. Here is my space.
 Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike
 Feeds beast as man: the nobleness of life
 Is to do thus, when such a mutual pair [*Embracing.*
 And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
 On pain of punishment, the world to weet
 We stand up peerless.

Now for the love of Love and her soft hours;
 Let's not confound the time with conference harsh.'

All this goes but to prove that many great thinkers and poets, without fathoming the cause, knew what one of them has quaintly but most profoundly expressed; 'That a potent love hath the nature of an isolated fatality, whereto the mind's opinions and wonted resolves are altogether alien; as for example, Daphnis, his frenzy, wherein it hath little availed him to have been convinced of Heraclitus, his doctrine; or the philtre-bred passion of Tristan, who, though he had been as deep as Duns Scotus, would have had his reasoning marred by that cup too much; or Romeo in his sudden taking for Juliet, wherein any objections he might have held against Ptolemy had made little difference to his discourse under the balcony. Yet all love is not such, even though potent; nay, this passion hath as large scope as any for allying itself with every operation of the soul, so that it shall ac-

knowledge an effect from the imagined light of unproven firmaments, and have its scale set to the grander orbits of what hath been and shall be.' I would have you remember this last passage, for I may have occasion to refer to it again. Meanwhile, what these great anatomists—mind, I say anatomists not psychologists—of the human heart have so truly portrayed in their fictitious creations, any one endowed with the least degree of observation may notice every day in real life. Honour goes for little or nothing where the love-passion comes into play. Men hitherto unimpeachable in their conduct have abandoned all earthly considerations when moved by a vehement attachment. It would seem as if they deemed themselves inspired by a higher motive, and so far, despite the objections of the strait-laced and hypercritically moral, the French novelists especially have been true to nature, when they represented men and women trampling upon society's laws in the furtherance of their passion. We may dub it false sentiment, call it putting a premium upon immorality, we overlook one thing, that these victims of the 'Genius of the Species,' must have more than human force of character, to resist *his promptings*, which we condemn because we think they are their own. 'Quand un homme et une femme ont l'un pour l'autre

une passion violente, il me semble toujours que, quelque soient les obstacles qui les séparent, un mari, des parents, etc., les deux amans sont l'un à l'autre, DE PAR LA NATURE, qu'ils s'appartiennent DE DROIT DIVIN, malgré les lois et les conventions humains,' remarks Chamfort. Demur as we may at this too lenient view, the justice of it cannot be denied, and it probably prompted Jesus in His lenient condemnation of the adulterous woman. 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone,' distinctly presupposes the possibility of the same failing in all those present. This is not condonement, simply withholding of punishment. A less pure motive inspires the greater part of Boccaccio's *Decameron*; the 'Genius of the Species' seems to revel as it were in the trampling under foot of the rights and interests of the individual. And, let me say it again, it is but a faithful picture of the contempt where-with all distinctions of rank and similar relationships are regarded and torn asunder by the 'Genius of the Species' when they oppose themselves to his aim, which pursues its immortal career, destroying, for the moment, by a mere touch of a magic wand, the consciousness of such obligations in the impassioned hearts of the lovers, who yield unconditionally to the powerful spell, regardless of consequences, though aware that they may be of the most fatal kind. At the 'Genius's'

appeal to the most deeply rooted feelings in human nature, the coward becomes courageous, the hero a poltroon, more afraid of the displeasure of a pair of soft, melting eyes, than he would have been of a thousand gaping cannons pointed at him. And do not think that these struggles of individualism with the 'Genius of the Species,' though entirely removed from our own interests for the time being, do not affect us. To be convinced of the contrary, you have but to notice the audience in a theatre when a love-play is being performed, or the most prosaic of money-makers when perusing a love-story. Their sympathies are entirely with the young lovers, who in the interest of the species are doing battle with their elders, entirely absorbed in the endeavour of making individual interests prevail. Unless the victory remain with the former, they leave the playhouse or close the book with a grunt of ill-concealed dissatisfaction. For though not later than the previous day these self-same fathers and mothers may have been engaged in thwarting the inclinations of their own sons and daughters, now that the brake of self-interest is removed they would fain assist in defeating motives similar to their own, because, despite themselves, there is a coercive voice, refusing to be stifled, which tells them that these struggles of the lovers are weightier in

their issue than no matter what opposition, merely involving the individual welfare. Hence in nearly all comedy the appearance of the 'Genius' with his concomitants, bent upon setting aside, nay, if needs be, destroying for ever the personal interests of the individual, in furtherance of his supreme aim. As a rule this supreme aim is accomplished; we call this poetical justice, it satisfies the spectator, because, once more—I cannot insist too much upon it—we know that the well-being of the human race must be of more import than the fictitious barriers erected between class and class, between poverty and affluence, between patrician and plebeian. That is why we leave the victorious lovers, consoled in our minds, thinking with them, that they have laid the foundations to their own happiness, while in most cases they have sacrificed it in the interest of the species, notwithstanding the warnings and opposition of their elders. In the few exceptional plays where the authors have endeavoured to reverse the proceedings—to exalt the interest of the individual to that of the species—the spectator feels a sorrow which he thinks his own, but which is nothing less than the wailing of the 'Genius,' to whose voice he finds himself listening, perhaps many years after all personal communications have ceased. I need but quote

those best known—*Romeo and Juliet*, *Tancred*, *Don Carlos*, *The Bride of Messina*, and *Wallenstein*.

“Neither is it the tragic element pervading those plays, nor the death of the lovers, that so powerfully arouses the spectator’s grief. The incidents and climax may be of the most comic, as long as the anti-climax does not unite the lovers, the play fails from the audience’s point of view, no matter how artistically it has been constructed, however heart-moving the catastrophe. In one of Balzac’s *Contes Drolatiques*—*Le Péché Véniel*—the lovers’ separation is treated in the most laughable aspect; nevertheless, it leaves us dissatisfied. For it would be idle to deny that the human love-passion does not offer as many comic as tragic incidents; it offers both. Taken possession of by the ‘Genius of the Species,’ no longer master of himself, man’s actions become incompatible with his ordinary self; the effects become *apparently* disproportionate to the cause. What invests the lover’s thoughts when under the influence of the highest degree of the love-passion, with such poetical and exalted aspects; what gives these thoughts their transcendental and hyperphysical direction, thanks to the power of which the lover seems to lose sight of his own, most material aim is in reality this. The ‘Genius of the Species,’ who for the time solely inspires him, excluding all

other feelings, deludes him into the belief that by sinking all personal considerations, he can make himself the instrument through which posterity may reach a hitherto unattained degree of perfection, that he and his mistress, or *vice versa*, are the only ones capable of accomplishing this task as the father and mother of the yet unborn human specimen. Laugh if you will at the imposture of the thing, the spell is as undeniably potent as the spell of far more transparent deceptions. The victims of these gross deceptions have also laughed where any but their own gullibility was being tested. Humanity calls this clear-sightedness, but it is rather a blindness to whatever does not lie within her immediate purposes, 'which carries her safely by the side of precipices, where vision would have been perilous with fear, if not dazzled altogether.' The lovers also think their vision keen, but if it were, they could not soar so high above all earthly considerations, they would share the fate of Icarus. And herein lies the comic aspect, to see the most matter-of-fact, prosaic individual clothe his aspirations in such a romantic garb, to see the greatest lout contract a certain gracefulness when the persistency of his animal instinct becomes as it were an idea which the 'Genius of the Species,' in order to evoke the sympathies of the looker-on, trans-

forms into a temporary flash of more than human intelligence. This is part of the 'Genius's' mission, to steep the consciousness of the lovers with each other's personality, to dangle before them, in the guise of anticipation, the bait of an endless, heavenly bliss, to be found only in the union with this and no other human creature. The vague and shadowy conceptions of beauty and perfection which had hitherto but flitted to and fro like phantasms in their spiritual natures, suddenly assume shape, life, and light, and *incarnate* themselves into a tangible whole that fills the soul to its inmost recesses, pervading it with a mysterious feeling of worship beyond expression. Their *self* is transferred to another, and the apocalypse of anticipated joy becomes so dazzling that when its realisation is threatened or rendered impossible, life gets intolerable, and death is eagerly welcomed as a means of ending the too poignant grief. The suicide's will was so entirely absorbed by the 'Genius of the Species,' his individualism so completely obliterated, that, baffled in his endeavours in the interest of the former, he disdained to labour for his own. Individualism is in this case too weak a vessel to be able to submit to the unsatisfied endless longing of the will of the 'Species,' bent upon the possession of a definite, concentrated object. The result is suicide, often twofold, unless

Nature steps in, saving life at the cost of reason, and charitably plunging the sufferer's consciousness into a beatific delusion that causes him to forget his hopeless situation."

Here Paradox paused for a moment and I repeated my former question.

"Whence then arise so many wretched unions, ostensibly contracted under the auspices of the 'Genius of the Species'?"

"Not ostensibly, in reality," answered my host; "I had not forgotten your question, but was coming to it, only this preamble was necessary. You are right in your remarks. It is not alone the ungratified love-passion that ends tragically, the gratified leads as often to wretchedness as to happiness. Because its claims often collide so much with the personal welfare of its victims, that they undermine them, seeing that they are incompatible with the remaining relations, and disturb the plan of life founded thereon. Yes, Love is not only antagonistic to the outward relations, but very frequently to our own immediate personality, inasmuch as it selects for us persons who, apart from our sexual sympathy for them, we should despise, nay, positively abhor. But the impulse of the species is so much more powerful than individual manifestation that the lovers close their eyes to all these drawbacks, remove or

reason away all objections to the consummation of their aim, which renew themselves with tenfold ardour when the 'Genius' is gratified, leaving the repulsive truth staring them in the face when too late, when the bond has been indissolubly tied. If you have treated of Molière; you must have seen this yourself, only Molière was too generous a nature to hate any one. Unless, therefore, you admit the irresistibility of this impulse, such *mésalliances* of mind—for there are *mésalliances* of mind as well as of moral worth and rank—as the world has seen committed by the greatest genii must remain inexplicable and unexplained. It is this impulse that saddles a Socrates, an Albert Dürer, a Bernard Palissy, with demons in the guise of women, for life. The ancients represented Eros as blind, and created the myth of Orpheus descending into hell after Eurydice, to emphasise the recklessness of humanity when under the spell of the 'Genius of the Species.' If I, Paradox, the child of Pegasus and Balaam's ass, were a sculptor, I should represent Eros not as blind, but as one temporarily paralysed, and borne on the back of a hungry wolf. Too many a man and woman have seen beforehand the misery in store for them, and still been powerless to escape from it. No, the 'Genius of the Species' has many faults, but hypocrisy and

deceit are not of them. Where Eros is blind is where the individual imagination comes into play, and invests the lovers mutually with charms assumed during the existence of that fool's paradise called courtship, when each of the lovers is bent upon displaying a small sample of every good quality under the sun, which is taken to guarantee delightful stores of the same material, only to be unpacked in the broad leisure of marriage. Once more, the 'Genius of the Species' is guiltless of this deceit; that does not belong to his province. Too well does he know his own power to require to demean himself by such trivial ruses, unworthy of the supreme position he occupies as the arbiter of posterity. He barter with mankind as Mephistopheles did with Faust, cards upon the table; he is not the pickpocket, but the noble highwayman, who says, 'Your reason or your life,' and who often, like Claude Duval, returns part of the spoil, when it would have been better that he had kept it all, and remained with his victims to perpetuate the charm of that now historical minuet danced on the heath. For the 'Genius of the Species,' like the French robber, has himself no alternative, he must live, and this is his only means of existence. He must ever have fresh supplies, and if people are to be robbed, surely it is better that it should be done gracefully. He cannot help

that at his departure, when his toll has been exacted, that his victim, bereft of the personal spell, should see no difference between him and the vulgarest Bill Sykes. To drop metaphor. Why the lovers are not deterred by the imperfections they plainly see before them is simply this. They do not work for themselves, but in the interest of an unborn third, though they are under the impression that all this striving is for their own benefit. But this very non-seeking of self—*Nicht seine Sache suchen*, as Schopenhauer calls it—which everywhere is the stamp of the most exalted striving, invests this longing of sexual love with the sublimest attributes, and makes it a theme worthy of the greatest poet. In fine, this sexual craving is so compatible with the bitterest hatred, that Plato has compared it to the love of the wolf for the sheep, an instance of which you will find in *Cymbeline*, where Cloten, despite all his efforts, cannot obtain a hearing; under such circumstances the hatred of the lover may go so far as to take the life of the beloved object, and then to take his own. He cannot help himself, he is under the same influence that compels some insects to carry out their intentions at no matter what cost."

"What about Petrarch?" I interrupted suddenly.

"I expected this," chuckled Paradox; "I trust you have not taken the Italian as the example of your vehement lover. His individuality was stronger than the power of the 'Genius,' or else he would have killed Laura. Still you may apply another theory. To the end of her life Laura deceived him with false hopes, whose expectation of realisation may have restrained him from violent acts. But, if we admit that his passion was real, his lifelong torture was worse than death. You know Goethe's lines on him—

'Und wenn der Mensch in seiner Quaal verstummt,
Gab mir ein Gott, zu sagen, wie ich leide.'

"And Dante?" I asked.

"Dante must always appear to us a godlike, not a human creature, as all sublime virtue must be an everlasting object of astonishment to the world, because it presupposes a radical revolution of the soul and a metamorphosis of mortal nature, the history of which we do not know, and therefore cannot judge. The combats such a soul has waged previous to its reaching this blessed peace, the experiences it has sustained, the trials borne, must remain a mystery. Alighieri is the only instance within my knowledge of an ideal, and consequently divine love. The 'Genius of the Species' would have been hailed as a welcome guest, perhaps, not as a fiend and de-

stroyer. The Italian was like a Schiller who mounted aloft in the storm to feel the closer effect of God's presence. Leave him alone, no mortals should speak of him. They can no more understand him than I, Paradox, can understand the jealousy of Othello, save from theory. It is like Tom Thumb trying to span the Nelson column. In every human being the *Non omnis moriar* is more or less developed. If the perpetuation of the name is not attainable by the mental product—and, however conscious of his worth, great genius is not always sure of posterity's verdict—it must be attained by the physical. Sexual union is, with him, like the line at the bottom of a commercial bill, 'In case of need.' But in Dante the surety of immortality was so strong that no such precaution was needed. You may work out your problem in that way if you like."

"I shall not be able to reconcile it with his subsequent marriage and illicit connexion when in exile."

"The blow that lays low the 'Genius of the Species,' is never fatal. Sooner or later he returns to the attack."

"But Dante might have again defeated him, had he been as at first."

"Polyphemus fell asleep and allowed Ulysses to trick him; it does not show that the giant

could not have remained awake if he had wished."

"Swift was not Polyphemus, and he remained awake."

"Perhaps, more likely, he went to sleep where folks could not find him. He was like the princess shut up in a donjon for fear of a lic devouring her, and who died of fright at the picture of a lion painted on the wall."

"Surely Mirabeau was not afraid of the lion."

"No; but he need not have taken him by the tail, and aggravated the brute into killing him because he could not allow him to get away in search of other food."

I laughed; there was something of the truth in Paradox's simile. He resumed his argument where I had interrupted it by my question about Petrarch.

"The struggle with individualism is the greatest pride of the 'Genius of the Species' especially where that individualism is strongly developed. He exults, as it were, in finding a foe man worthy of his steel, and is not always a generous, though ever an honest antagonist, provided you believe in the old maxim, that everything is fair in love and war. He unscrupulously sacrifices the welfare of nations as well as that of individuals; for he thinks, and rightly perhaps, that the claims of the whole human race

should be above everything. In this respect the ancients were right when they represented the 'Genius of the Species,' who is none other than Eros, as a child. The child is the supreme consideration, though it becomes a despotic fiend, carrying devastation, and wings also, by which it flees from the mischief it has wrought, bending gods and men to its will. The latter attributes also mean inconstancy, which, as a rule, steps in with disillusion, the concomitant of gratification."

"Not always," I remonstrated.

"Not always," assented Paradox; "only there where the passion was founded on illusion, inspired by the 'Genius of the Species,' who for the time being took possession of the individualism, which he now liberates. Abandoned by him, the individual, no longer a lover, sees with surprise the poverty of what he has so heroically striven for.

'Tis an old lesson, and time approves it true,
 And they who know it best, deplore it most;
 When all is won, that all desire to woo,
 The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost.'

The individual sees that he has been the dupe of the 'Genius of the Species.' *Wäre Petrarca's Leidenschaft befriedigt worden, so wäre von dem an, sein Gesang verstummt, wie der des Vogels, sobald die Eier gelegt sind.*"

Just note this down as a warning to your readers, who, under the influence of an unrequited or baffled love-affair, may think themselves justified in rushing into print, paint, music, or marble. The debauched genius may dissipate his talents in the cup; but *lumer le piot*, as Rabelais has it, will not provide mediocrity with genius. Mirabeau may kill himself with sexual excess, but no amount of the same excess, or virtuous living and sobriety, will make a Gabriel Honoré of Podsnap or Spuddleface. The roar of the hungry lion reverberates for miles around, and strikes the listener with awe and admiration; the piteous whine of Paradox's starving fellow-creature brings down reprimand and ridicule in the shape of whacks. The plethora of the Nile means not only destruction but also fructifying; the bursting of a water-pipe means nothing but the effects of an ordinary thaw."

"I have it down, but I wish to return for a moment to your previous remarks about the outcome of unhappy love-affairs influencing literature and art; Rousseau, Raphael, Clément Marot were not altogether unhappy?"

"Jean-Jacques made a compromise with the 'Genius of the Species,' he gave him satisfaction at home. Thérèse le Vasseur was the sacrifice, Madame d'Houdetot was the ideal. Julie would have been a great deal less charming if his

“It is curious,” said I, “that the same idea should have struck me when writing my essay on Petrarch, though I felt diffident in giving it weight; so I left the question open.”

“Depend upon it you would have been right. Your sonnet is born sometimes of hope, more often of despair; of gratified desire never, or rarely. Shakspeare’s assured possession of the lady to whom the sonnets were addressed would have produced no sonnets. Even expectation of such illicit bliss as your great men craved must necessarily be dumb; it must and prefers to feed in silence; it may indulge in open despair because it testifies to the resistance of the woman; the world can find nothing to object against. Balzac is right, ‘Ce n’est pas l’espérance mais le désespoir qui donne la mesure de nos ambitions. On se livre en secret aux beaux poèmes de l’espérance, tandis que la douleur se montre sans voile.’ Had your ‘Great Men’s Amour’ been happy ones, you would have had a difficulty in finding the materials for your book; their influence upon literature would have been null. Love and the love-song, whether in the shape of a comedy, a picture, an anthem, a poem or a statue, dies of indigestion, never of want. But for this starvation, half of Molière’s comedies would not have been written, the *Nouvelles Héloïse* would have been prosaic throughout.

Just note this down as a warning to your readers, who, under the influence of an unrequited or baffled love-affair, may think themselves justified in rushing into print, paint, music, or marble. The debauched genius may dissipate his talents in the cup; but *lumer le piot*, as Rabelais has it, will not provide mediocrity with genius. Mirabeau may kill himself with sexual excess, but no amount of the same excess, or virtuous living and sobriety, will make a Gabriel Honoré of Podsnap or Spuddleface. The roar of the hungry lion reverberates for miles around, and strikes the listener with awe and admiration; the piteous whine of Paradox's starving fellow-creature brings down reprimand and ridicule in the shape of whacks. The plethora of the Nile means not only destruction but also fructifying; the bursting of a water-pipe means nothing but the effects of an ordinary thaw."

"I have it down, but I wish to return for a moment to your previous remarks about the outcome of unhappy love-affairs influencing literature and art; Rousseau, Raphael, Clément Marot were not altogether unhappy?"

"Jean-Jacques made a compromise with the 'Genius of the Species,' he gave him satisfaction at home. Thérèse le Vasseur was the sacrifice, Madame d'Houdetot was the ideal. Julie would have been a great deal less charming if his

passion for the latter woman had been co-summated."

"And Raphael?"

"Raphael was the most sensible man the world ever produced. He never made himself any illusions about *La Fornarina*, any more than you create yourself any allusion about your butcher and baker who supply you with your daily food. As long as they serve you well, you do not leave them, though you do not make poems about them. Raphael's genius owes nothing to his love, though his love may have been indebted for something to his genius—namely, to do well and decently what was worth doing. You know George Herbert's lines—

'Who sweeps a floor as in God's sight,
Makes that and the action fine.'

"What of Clément Marot? Neither his love nor verses ceased with possession."

"Because, first of all, it was not assured secondly, because his imagination continued to invest Marguèrite de Navarre with fictitious perfections, born from superiority of station. Vanity played a greater part in that compact than love. It was the strongest trait of Marot's personality and went hand-in-hand with the 'Genius of the Species' in this principal love-affair. In the preliminary skirmish with the girl at the Porte-

Barbette, as well as in that with the supposed Diana de Poitiers, the 'Genius' was entirely absent, and though vanity sustained a defeat, there was nothing behind it to prevent it from retiring unharmed, mortified, but skin-whole."

"Then, according to your showing, all unions inspired solely by love, or the 'Genius of the Species,' must turn out unhappy."

"Yes; unions from love are made solely in the interest of the species, not in that of individuals. The lovers are under the delusion of promoting their own happiness, but the real motive is foreign and hidden to them, inasmuch as it aims at the creation of a third being, only possible through them and through no other. Brought together for this purpose, they should endeavour henceforth to get on together as smoothly as possible. But very often the pair united by this instinctive delusion, which is the very essence of passionate love's yearnings, are in all other respects, totally unsuited to each other; in disposition as well as character. This only shows itself when the delusion, as it must necessarily do, vanishes. That is the reason why, as a rule, love-matches turn out unhappy; the coming generation has been benefited at the cost of the present. And the gulled parties, despite their love of progeny, cry out with Sydney Smith, 'What has posterity done for us, that we should

be sacrificed to her.' *Quien se casa por amores, ha devivir con dolores* (Who marries for love, has to live for sorrow), says a Spanish proverb."

"But if we eliminate love, what then is to be the basis of marriage, or union, as you prefer to call it? Would you make it one of convenience simply, as they do in France, where the parents choose instead of the lovers?"

"No; though I am far from looking at the darker side of this question only, as you and many semi-utopists have done. I can at least see that the considerations which move parents to bring about such unions, however prosaic they may be in many respects, have one advantage, they are real and likely to last, while the impulse that unites two young people is not real and, as a rule, short-lived, unless they have had time to study each other's dispositions, to calculate how much pure love, founded upon esteem and mutual appreciation—as distinct from the potent illusion supplied by the 'Genius of the Species'—there will remain when that most volatile essence of his love-philtre shall have evaporated. In that way, the well-being of the coming generation may be secured without damage to the present, though the latter point must always remain more or less problematical as in all human ventures. *Le mariage est une greffe ; cela prend bien ou mal*, observes

Victor Hugo. The chances are, however, that where the natural as well as acquired capabilities of both plants have been studied, the grafting will turn out satisfactorily. Both plants should give as much as they receive. The union should only be consummated after a thorough knowledge of their receptive as well as effusive properties. To accomplish this human grafting, a protracted probationary term is needed, in other words a long term of courtship. I know and agree with the many objections attendant on such delays, but they are counter-balanced by many more advantages. By all means let us prolong, if we can, these months of waiting, they are the happiest in life. Even possession of the beloved one cannot weigh against these chaste and innocent hours of affection. Love is like the cycle of the months, most beautiful in their spring, when the promise of happiness is but in the bud, but whose nascent perfume intoxicates and nourishes more than the full-blown flower, which we know must wither soon unless we can preserve it by some abstruse process; even then it is never the same, the freshness has departed, and the memory of its fragrance contributes more to our wish to keep it than its actual faded beauty.

“In one of his most charming essays, Petrarch naïvely confesses to Laura that to him she is the

goal of a sublime pilgrimage towards which he, the pilgrim, is marching all his life. He avows, though, that in the chapels which mark the route, he now and then halts to offer short prayers to other Madonnas. I would have none of these chapels, none of these Madonnas; the route should be straight so that Laura may be seen from the very beginning. If man expects purity in his wife, let him commence a period of purifying observance from the day of his betrothal. 'For the satire which has confined the word virgin to one sex shall be perceived when men have learned to exact of their own souls that which they exact of woman.'

"Courtship should be unto marriage what the overture is to the opera. No musician worthy of his art would willingly curtail a note in the composition or performance. For not only does it predispose the audience for good or evil, for praise or blame, it also prevents their æsthetic nerves from being too rudely shaken by having them plunged too quickly into *medias res*. An opera with merely an introduction, instead of the orthodox overture, leaves us uncertain for the whole of the five acts, but where the latter has precluded the theme or themes, our minds have become plastic; consequently more open to favourable impressions.

"And what an overture this courtship is, light

and aërial in its windings, interspersed with the happy, aspiring chants of the young pair. To understand its full charm, we should consult the old poetry of the Germans where it treats of the pleasures of that period ; for in the happy fatherland the betrothal used to, and does still, form a veritable epoch in the young folks' lives.

“There, where a promise has been exchanged, the young man becomes at once, as it were, the son of his intended father-in-law. Often he is as yet without a profession, or too poor to realise his project of marriage ; if so, he parts for foreign lands to lay the foundation of his fortune ; but he parts, with a ring on his finger, love in his heart, and the girl waits for him years and years, without forgetting or being forgotten. More often still his studies or trade compel him to live in a neighbouring town, and the only day in the week he can call his—or theirs, I should say—is the Sunday. How early he is on the road, but still she is earlier ; she sees him coming from afar, runs to meet him, and during the whole of that day what questions, what plans, what interchanges of sweet hopes, noble desires, aspirations towards the good and the beautiful. After such a courtship, marriage does not appear as a material union, but rather as the supreme consecration of the fusion of two souls.

“ Critics will object that this is a picture of the lower classes ; that the delay is enforced, not voluntary. It may be so, though I do not see why there should be more hurry among the rich. Do they think that the ‘ Genius of the Species ’ will be conciliated for having been taken at his worth there and then ? It would appear so, for long engagements are cavilled at, and every one interested in them does his best to hasten their consummation, as if afraid of their own troth and word, as if apprehensive of becoming better known to each other. In their foolish impatience the term prescribed by the law is abridged, as if too long for two beings who shall henceforth not leave each other, to study each other’s peculiarities. It seems as if marriage were a play to be acted in so many hours—prologue, drama, and all ; rehearsal there has been little or none, and if the first act of the piece is performed smoothly, we may easily imagine what the subsequent acts and epilogue will be—a muddle ; the actors unacquainted with their parts, trusting to the devil to prompt them. Modern custom has removed from love’s picture-gallery the figures of the lovers and substituted those of the ‘ engaged.’ We are daily returning to the primitive form of ‘ Capture in Marriage.’ If the ceremony is not performed, as among the Kalmucks, on horseback, it is enacted

at least with railway-like speed. The nineteenth century ballroom or garden-party is simply Herodotus' marriage-market under another name. And she who suffers most by this arrangement is the woman. For depend upon it, the farewell of Sakontala to her native home, sisters, favourite birds, and pet animals, is not a trivial comedy—it is Nature herself. Though the young girl may have desired and watched, and counted the days that shall unite her to the beloved, when that day comes it is always found to come too soon. Because then, and then only, she feels what she leaves behind. Not because she does not love the man whom she marries, but because, from a strange inconsistency, in following the husband she regrets the lover. It is therefore that I would make the transition as gradual as possible, so that these two might have ample time not to expel the 'Genius of the Species,' but to carefully weigh his claims. In a case like this he is treated as an equal, not as a superior, as one who should have a vote in the arrangements but not the casting vote. A compromise—has been arrived at, but not such a one as that of Rousseau, which leaves the 'Genius' the master of one field, while individualism gleans in another. It is the compromise of co-operation. If not satisfied, the 'Genius' may go, there is still sufficient material left for happiness.

“Under such conditions love’s yearning go hand in hand with the satisfaction of the individual. Between such lovers, who have learned to appreciate each other before they became man and wife, the ‘Genius of the Species’ is powerful to create a second impression on behalf of a new object. The written marriage certificate, the social commandments are there, the same as the laws exist for transgressor and innocent alike but such a pair need them not, either as deterrents or stimulants. Their deed of partnership sealed by the registrar or priest, is like that betwixt two honourable men, much more for the sake of the world than as a contemplated check upon their own actions. In such a union there is neither superior nor inferior, especially in the eyes of the husband, because his sole aim consists in teaching his wife to be free, to have an individual will. In such a holy alliance, Shakspeare’s charity—twice blessed, ‘because it giveth and receiveth’—plays the principal part; there is not only a co-mingling of qualities, but a transfer of them. The wife becomes strong and powerful because of the support of the husband, becomes gentler because of her influence; tender affection, that adds to the ardour of passion the sweet and penetrating gentleness and sympathy, steals into both their hearts and melts them into one. They will probably ha

other objects very dear to them—their children, their parents—but nothing equals the feeling which they experience for each other. There exists in the whole world but one being that feels like the husband, that being is the wife; there is but one being that feels like the wife, that being is the husband; the same thoughts rise in their hearts, the same words start to their lips at the same moment; their features, through the habit of like sentiments, contract a resemblance, and to see, to hear them, we get convinced that there is a stronger parentage than that of blood, the parentage of the soul.

“Such a union need not fear time and its ravages. It is the miserable, frivolous employment of woman’s life, it is her enforced idleness, bred from indifference to her husband’s affairs and all the petty vanities and passions born from that idleness that wither her face prematurely, that wither her happiness at the same time. While youth, that most charming of all lies, lasts, the well-filled outline of the figure hides all, and if now and then an unrighteous aspiration of the soul causes it to wrinkle, the crease is almost instantaneously effaced by the elasticity of the youthful flesh; but when age comes, every habitual thought makes a rut; envy contracts the mouth, and the disenchantment of the husband soon follows the premature decline of the wife.

She whom we have attempted to sketch has to fear nothing of this kind from the merciless hand of time. Michael Angelo was reproached one day for having depicted the Virgin beautiful still, at an age which was no longer young. 'Do not you see,' he replied, 'that it is the beauty of her soul which has preserved the beauty of her face!' So it will be with the wife, truly a wife; all the good she has done during her maternal and conjugal career, every pure and elevated thought, will spread on her features a charm of expression, a nobleness of trait foreign to her in her youthful days, and time, instead of stealing will be compelled to give.

"Age may fearlessly come to such a union, it will never alter it, unless it breaks it by the hand of Death, its auxiliary. When the children, grown up, and started on their own mission in life, shall have quitted the paternal hearth, leaving to themselves the two old companions, the recollection of their pure and affectionate pilgrimage, the consciousness of having mutually improved each other, the certainty of immortality, born from love which never wavered nor weakened, will suffice to shield their souls from the icy contact of age. Their affection will grow in holiness, as earth gradually recedes and heaven draws near; they will love each other as companions about to leave each other, sure of

re-union in that hereafter which will be but an enduring prolongation of that Kingdom of Heaven, which they had built themselves here on earth."

Towards the latter part of this discourse, Paradox, in his excitement, rose to his feet, and I, yielding to the contagious enthusiasm, followed his example. All at once he stopped, giving me the opportunity of asking a question.

"Will you tell me," I said, "why this happiness has been unattainable to my 'Great Men?'"

"Because their individualism was too strong, hence too self-reliant, they never condescended to consult the 'Genius of the Species,' to fathom his intentions, and while they mocked at him, he took advantage of their contempt to make them, for the time being, his slaves, body and soul. The exception was Raphael, you have seen how happy he was?"

"Yes, because he made himself no illusions. His was also a compromise. But might not his happiness have sprung from the knowledge that he was free, that no legal tie bound him to Margarita?"

"Perhaps so, because he felt that he had not made too great a sacrifice to the 'Genius of the Species.' But the unhappiness of your 'Great Men' did not arise from this. Each one, with

the exception of Swift, would have been ready to marry the object of his affections, and Swift's misery was caused by his evading, not by complying with the 'Genius's' promptings. Their misery arose from undervaluing or overvaluing the power of their foe. A bold foe would have given them the exact measure of that power. Besides, a man is more likely to be happy with a wife than with a mistress. A sporadic passion means injustice either to Nature herself, or to one's fellow-creatures. The 'Genius of the Species' is himself to some extent opposed to it. The moment man has acknowledged his supreme power, he is far from averting to a compromise. But the terms of this compromise he will dictate according to the laws of civilisation for which, though independent of them, he has a certain respect. He says in many words: "I have given you a commission under which I am responsible to the world for your acts, but you are responsible to me. Do not use this authority to go privateering, do not wash my hands of you, and if caught leave you to the mercy of those you have offended, but if you do this, that if they let you off, I will punish you in some way. The power I have given you must be used in accordance with the rules of honourable warfare; if you disabuse them or leave your ship, you commit a breach of discipline."

punishable by me and by Society. Your *un-legalised* passion may sway its victims for some time, but it means injustice, and 'injustice,' says Voltaire, 'ends by producing independence.' All effort at independence must be more or less accompanied by revolt. Every woman is not of the Héloïse stamp. She knows that by withholding the honoured title of matron from her, you are doing her an injustice; hence there comes a time when there is a solution of continuity in the real or imaginary submission with which she bowed to your superior strength. Your mastership should not leave her a slave for ever, and this she is if not bound by the civil laws of her country. The mirage of the mistress's life is marriage. She is ever in pursuit of this to her 'Will o' the Wisp.' In fact, in passing from the mistress to the wife, the moralising influence of woman suddenly finds the so much needed character, wanted until then, continuity. The mistress's empire rarely survives the youth and beauty which gave it birth, and woman is most painfully aware of this. Consequently there is scarcely any attempt at husbanding the affection. Loving or not, she dreads the moment when her waning charms will produce the anticipated effect, desertion. To this may be ascribed much of the frivolity, the lack of seriousness, in these illicit relations.

There is a moral Nemesis, much stronger even than the verdict of the world, the Eumenides our own hopes and fears. Marriage alone can lay these furies, by it that which was pleasure becomes duty, the law of one day becomes that of a whole life, a calm authority, instead of blustering tyranny. No woman can exercise salutary influence upon a man unless she is married to him."

Before Paradox had time to utter another word, a fearful crash was heard, and the carriage with its occupant vanished into air.

* * * *

It was the servant, accompanied by my friend who knocked at my door. I awoke, and found that I had passed the night in my chair, with Schopenhauer's chapter, entitled *Metaphysik der Geschlechtsliebe*, open on the table, and an engraving of Rosa Bonheur's stable on the wall opposite. Hence my dream.

"Have you followed my advice?" asked my friend, who was come to take me to a wedding. He looked at the book. "Now do you know what love is?" he asked.

I told him my dream, then answered his question by a question. "Have you ever heard Ernst Saphir's acrostic definition of Love, which was asked by a lady to write it in her album. *LIEB LÄNGER IRRTHUM EINES BETROGENEN ESSELS.*"

“And,” retorted my friend, laughing, “do you know the lady’s reversal of the acrostic? ESELHAFTE BEMERKUNG EINES JÜDISCHEN LÜMMELS.”

Perhaps my friend’s facetious remark anent my appreciation of Paradox’s view was apposite. One part of it was at least correct. I leave the reader to judge which. At any rate, Atta Troll’s sarcastic innuendo, *Schreiben Esel nicht Kritiken?* was almost realised.

THE END.



PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND HANSON
LONDON AND EDINBURGH





Vertical text or markings on the left side of the page, appearing as a series of small, irregular marks and a faint vertical line.

A few small, dark marks or artifacts located in the bottom right corner of the page.



